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THE COMMUNIST

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MAY FIRST, 1931

MAY FIRST, 1931, finds American capitalism deeper in a crisis than it ever was before. Even its pet economists no longer dare to treat this crisis merely as a temporary derangement which will correct itself. Of course they try to put all of the blame for the evident inability of capitalism to liquidate the crisis on "dumping" and other diabolical measures of the Soviet Union. However, they make no efforts to explain how the actually infinitesimal share of the Soviets in world foreign trade can upset the "solid foundations" of capitalist economy. And the basis on which the part played by the Soviets in this phenomenon could be explained is rejected by these gentlemen. But this basis is crystallizing more and more rapidly into a hard and undeniable fact—the overwhelming success of the Five-Year Plan of the Soviet Union.

The success of the Five-Year Plan is a political factor which tends more and more to turn the "temporary" derangement of capitalist economy into a permanent crisis. It is the factor which—as some capitalist spokesmen put it—puts "capitalism on trial."

The output of Soviet industrial and agricultural production, in spite of its rapid growth, is still very small. For some time to come this increase will be absorbed by the internal market. The actual exports are to a large degree measures to cover the necessary purchases of foreign machinery and equipment by the Soviet industries. It is therefore not the quantity of goods put on the foreign markets by the Soviet Union that can or does upset capitalist economy or that prevents the upset capitalist economy from correcting itself. If capitalism is unable to carry thru this correction, it is partly because its very corrective is being upset by the progress of the Russian Revolution.

The only method capitalism knows for the solution of any of its troubles is to unload the resulting burdens on the shoulders of the working class. It has proceeded to apply this corrective in the present crisis also. Rationalization, wage-cuts, and also bank failures were instruments in the hands of the capitalists to unload the burdens of the present crisis on the working class. But this unloading becomes increasingly difficult. The main reason for this difficulty is exactly the existence of the Soviet Union and the progress the Soviet Union is making in the accomplishment of the Five-Year Plan.

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The existence of the Soviet Union enables the workers to contrast, for the first time in history, capitalist economy with Socialist economy. Even tho the revolutionary transformation into a socialist economy is still in process, even though the present economic structure of the Soviet Union is not yet a fully socialist one, yet the superiority of this system of economy over capitalist economy is already evident. Even the anti-Soviet propaganda of the capitalist world, and especially of our American capitalists, cannot materially interfere with the growing impression which the building of socialism is making on the workers in the capitalist countries. On the contrary, the very desperation with which capitalism approaches its task of belittling the economic progress of the Soviet Union and of slandering its system, leads them to so many contradictions that their intention becomes obvious. As a result their lies tend to fall flat. Thus, for instance, we meet the persistent propaganda of the failure of the Five-Year Plan. In parallel columns of the same papers we find the bosses' propaganda about the growing competition which capitalist-made commodities meet from Soviet-made goods in the world's market. And in every one of these propaganda articles we are told of the rapid increase of production in the Soviet Union and the consequent rapid growth of the danger of competition. According to this propaganda, the failure of the Five-Year Plan consists in its success.

When we judge the influence of the Soviet Union on the progress of the capitalist crisis, we can for the time being disregard the influence of Soviet-made goods on this crisis. No matter what the progress of socialist construction may be in the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union does not intend to and never can compete capitalism out of existence. The Five-Year—and successive plans of that sort—aim in their economic purpose at the establishment of socialism for the Russian workers and not at the establishment of socialism in America. The growth of industrial output in the Soviet Union will, in the main, contribute to the rapid and unprecedented improvement of the conditions of the workers in Russia. The Soviet Union is a workers' government. It does not have capitalist aims. It carries thru the socialist reorganization of society solely for its own, for the workers' benefit.

The difficulty which capitalism confronts in its effort to solve its crisis therefore does not consist in cheaper Soviet-made goods on the world's markets. It consists in a rapidly and fundamentally changing ideology of the working class. It consists in the fact that the revolutionary developments in the Soviet Union are arousing the workers in the capitalist world. They are gradually but visibly leaving their pro-capitalist conceptions. These conceptions have in

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the past tended to make them unresisting objects of the maneuvers and measures on the part of the capitalists to unload the burden of any crisis on the working class and thereby to solve the crisis at the expense of the masses. The workers begin to change. Instead of continuing to ask the question "*What will our bosses do* to liquidate the crisis?" they begin to ask "*What can we do* to 'liquidate' the crisis?" The influence of the growth of socialism in the Soviet Union is awakening the working masses. It gradually dawns upon them that they need not forever be objects of history, to be pushed back and forth and kicked about by economic and political forces which they do not understand. By the example of the Soviets they learn that they can make themselves the masters of these forces and that they themselves can make history.

What this means for American capitalism, for instance, is evident. Aside from the immediate cyclical crisis, American imperialism is very hard pressed by the general crisis of world capitalism. It has the highest developed productive machinery. It is the most powerful and richest imperialism. Yet its share in world territory, in comparison with other imperialisms, is very limited. The time when the expansion of capitalism in America could proceed on the strength of its home markets is rapidly passing. With the passing of this period of American capitalism, the urge increases for imperialist expansion. When the home markets can no longer be extended to fit the rapidly increasing power and means of production, and the equally rapid accumulation of capital, then American capitalism must become more and more imperative in its demand for a redistribution of the world. It must demand more and more imperatively a redistribution of the world in which its share in world territory is commensurate with the position it holds in the world as the richest, the most productive, the most systematically machined power for exploitation.

The present crisis has aggravated this general and fundamental problem of American capitalism. The present period of over-production has intensified its hunger for new markets. It is therefore trying hard to expand its markets by all means possible. While this policy inevitably leads to a new imperialist conflict, it also manifests itself at the present moment in another direction. American capitalism is interested in the solution of the present economic crisis of capialism from the standpoint of capitalism in general. But that does not turn American capitalists into altruists. They are satisfied if they can solve the problem for themselves and leave the rest of the capitalist world to the devil. They are willing to solve their own crisis at the expense of the rest of the capitalist world.

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But to do that means first of all to unload the cost of such a maneuver on the workers. In order successfully to attempt crowding the competition of other capitalist commodities off the desirable world's markets, American capitalism must "cheapen" its own production.

Immediately after the world war, European capitalism was sick to death. The sick patient—European capitalism—was then treated to Americanization. Americanization of production was to increase the productivity of the European workers to a point where European capitalism could pay, out of the products of its toilers, not only profits for the capitalists but also the costs of the war and reparations. American capitalism, which at that time systematically contributed to the Americanization of production in Europe, is now trying to solve its problem by Europeanization of the American working class. It exported its systems of efficiency and rationalization to Europe, now in return it is importing from Europe the system of miserable working and living standards for the working class. All leading capitalist magazines are persistently putting forward the program of a general reduction in the living standards of the American working class. This program is put forward now, after general wage-cuts have already reduced the earning capacity of the American worker, when employed, from 25 to 60 per cent. This program is put forward not as a justification of past wage-cuts, but as a program of new and more wage-cuts.

It is evident that the existence of the Soviet Union, the progress of the Soviet Union in building socialism, the consequent continuous improvement of working conditions of the Soviet worker, the liquidation of unemployment in the Soviet Union, the raising of the peasantry from the unspeakable level of actual serfdom under the Tsarist land barons to the height of members of the ruling class of Russia as workers on the Soviet industrial farms, presents a formidable obstacle to American capitalists in the way of the Europeanization of the American working class. The efforts of the American capitalists to reduce the working and living standards of the workers are intensifying the process of change in the ideology of the American working class. The workers are not only asking themselves the question: "Why should we wait to see what the bosses do to 'solve' the crisis? Let us take a hand in that 'solution' ourselves," but they come to the conclusion that just because capitalism is trying to solve the crisis the way it does, it becomes necessary for the workers to take a hand in the solution. The Europeanization of the American working class conceived by the capitalists as a measure in the solution of its crisis, therefore becomes a new, intensifying factor in the crisis. In other words, the medicine for

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the disease "improves" the sickness, and the patient gets worse.

May Day, 1931, therefore, does not seem to be any nearer the end of the capitalist crisis than was May Day, 1930. On the contrary, the crisis has reached a point in which every measure taken against it becomes an aggravating factor for it. It has reached the point where the merging of the cyclical crisis with a general crisis of capitalism becomes more and more intimate. It has reached the point where the working class learns more and more clearly that it must take a hand in the solution of the crisis. Its position changes objectively and subjectively, so that it becomes increasingly easier for it to be a deciding factor in the solution of the crisis. The crisis has become a more and more formidable factor.

The growing intensity of the crisis thus produced, creates in turn an intensification of the war danger. As a result May Day, 1931, finds especially the international capitalist conspiracy against the Soviet Union ripening. This conspiracy, the growing danger of capitalist military intervention in the Soviet Union, is, aside from unemployment and mass misery of the working class of the capitalist countries, the outstanding issue of the day.

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The American Background of May Day

By VERNE SMITH

OF ALL the international days of demonstration, the oldest, perhaps the most significant, the one that foreshadows all the rest, is the First of May—and fittingly enough it is the one most clearly and openly against the capitalist system as such, though it invariably carries with it the struggle against whatever grievance is uppermost in workers' minds at the same time.

As a matter of fact, it began that way—in America, with a general strike for the eight-hour day. The international aspect was recognized at a world congress of workers, in Paris, three years later.

The first international celebration of the First of May as Labor Day came still another year later, 1890, and was in support of what was to have been the second general strike of American workers for the eight-hour day.

The workers who conducted that first May Day demonstration are the immediate fathers of the working class of today. The organizations, the American Federation of Labor and the Second International, which were most closely involved, are still with us. Both have now betrayed the First of May. The A. F. of L., at least, was betraying it at the time of the first demonstration.

There are many lessons in the history of the First of May. Some of the strategy which the A. F. of L. has used ever since was devised at the period of the two main eight-hour strikes.

Formally the A. F. of L. led the first eight-hour-day general strike of 1886—a fact which must be surprising enough to many workers but is easier to understand as the incidents of the time are more closely examined. Formally (and in fact he seemed at times to boast of it) Gompers started the train of events that led to the 1886 strike. Actually he was carrying out a complicated maneuver that has been imitated many times since by A. F. of L. leaders.

In his own autobiography, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor*, Gompers boasts that he also proposed the international celebration of May First in 1890. There is at least considerable doubt about this.

Before 1886 even the A. F. of L. was celebrating the "Labor Day" it recognizes now—the first Monday in September. That is

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the day given to Labor by the legislatures of the various states. It is, as Danel De Leon pointed out years ago, a kind of grand prize-stock show, in which the A. F. of L. leaders parade the "voting cattle" they hope to sell to the highest bidder among the capitalist parties on election day, approximately two months later.

In 1885, the Chicago Anarchists were demonstrating against the A. F. of L. and other reactionary unions, on the official A. F. of L. "Labor Day" before a May 1 world demonstration was thought of.

It is to the Chicago Anarchists (actually not anarchists at all—direct action, or non-parliamentary socialists would be a better name for them) that we owe the main basic agitation for a general strike for the eight-hour day. The working class in the early '80's of last century was in rebellious mood, ready for revolt and waiting for the zero hour. The eight-hour-day fight was in the air. There had been a succession of great strikes: the Fall River textile workers' strike of 1884, 5,000 out for 18 weeks, lost; the Hocking Valley Coal strike, the same year, six months long, with evictions and Pinkerton detectives and the militia finally smashing it; the Saginaw Valley lumber workers' strike in 1885, 5,500 strong, two months, won; four great railroad strikes on the Gould lines in 1884 and 1885, the first being won and the last one lost, betrayed by the Knights of Labor. There were cigarmakers' strikes and stove mounters' strikes and all kinds of strikes in this period—lots of struggle. There were boycotts and "striking on the job." It was also a period of depression, and there was a wave of wage cuts.

During this period, and in spite of occasional open treacheries, the Knights of Labor was forced into leadership, and got much credit. It was gaining members. It had 42,517 members in 1882; 51,914 in 1883; after which the membership rose too rapidly for accurate counting to about 700,000 in 1886.

The A. F. of L. claimed 100,000 in 1884, but its national convention attendance showed a steady weakening. The first convention, which formed the A. F. of L., or, to be exact, the organization which afterwards, in 1886, became the A. F. of L., the "Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada," was held in 1881 with 104 delegates. The 1882 convention of the federation had 19 delegates; the 1883 delegation had 27, but the 1884 convention, in Chicago, at which the famous May 1 resolution was passed, had only 25.

Gompers, chief founder of the federation, a practical politician and a most treacherous one, proceeded to capitalize the strike sentiment; indeed, he had to do something to keep his organization to

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the front. With his blessing a resolution was introduced in the 1884 convention of the federation reading as follows:

> "Resolved, by the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, that eight hours shall constitute a legal day's labor from and after May 1, 1886, and that we recommend to labor organizations throughout this jurisdiction that they so direct their laws as to conform to this resolution by the time named."

Now, that might mean a call to strike on May 1, 1886, for the eight-hour day. If the working class so accepted it, the A. F. of L. got the credit for calling the strike and all the glory. If something went wrong, Gompers could disavow the strike call—saying it meant nothing of the sort, at least not a general strike.

The working class did accept this as a call to strike on May 1. They put their own interpretation on the resolution. The national unions in the federation were quite indifferent to the call to strike. Only the cigar makers and carpenters had even voted to support such a strike financially when the 1885 convention was held, with only 18 delegates. Still, the 1885 convention did not repeal the resolution. That was not Gompers' way, and it was no part of the A. F. of L. tactics from that time on when faced with a militant working class sentiment.

Powderly and the other bureaucrats of the Knights of Labor did dare openly to fight against the will of the workers to struggle, and it was disastrous to the Knights of Labor. Powderly sent out one of his famous "secret orders," a circular to affiliated bodies, which instructed them to oppose the strike for eight hours. Powderly, like some later misleaders, notably the Trotskyists, brought out at this time an argument now known as "Right opportunism concealed by left phrases," a classic example of that sort of opportunism. He said: "To talk of reducing the hours of labor without reducing the power of the machinery to oppress instead of to benefit, is a waste of energy. What men gain through a reduction of hours will be taken from them in another way while the rule of iron continues. The advocate of the eight-hour system must go beyond the reduction of the number of hours a man must work, and must labor for the establishment of a just and humane system of land ownership, control of machinery, railroads and telegraphs as well as equitable currency system . . ." etc., in fact, nothing but the revolution will help. (Powderly, *Thirty Years of Labor*, requoted from Bimba.) This "secret" circular became public; this treason was used to great advantage by the A. F. of L. in its attack on the K. of L., which practically vanished a few years after 1886.

As all the world knows, the general strike took place, centering

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in Chicago, where the propaganda of the so-called "Anarchists" was strongest. And this strike was drenched in the blood of Haymarket, and the hanging of the leaders of the working class. Both Gompers and Powderly and their henchmen betrayed and repudiated the leaders on trial and afterwards; Gompers records that he regarded the Haymarket affair as "a catastrophe, halting our eight-hour-day program." He tells how, three years later, when the second May First strike was being agitated, he sent circulars to the President of the United States, the cabinet, 40 senators, and 75 representatives, assuring them that there was no radicalism in this move, and "to forestall any association of the movement with the anarchistic influences."

The May First strike of 1886 involved nearly half a million workers, and some 200,000 won a shorter work day. It made the A. F. of L. the dominant labor organization in the United States, the K. of L. discredited by opposition to the strike, and the Anarchists deserted, isolated, and crushed by the terror.

Then began inevitably the second drive for the shorter work day, especially as while the A. F. of L. was resting on its laurels, the employers began to take back the concessions that had been forced from them.

Gompers was against further struggle. In 1887 in Brooklyn, he struck a keynote that has resounded since in A. F. of L. presidential speeches:

> "... with fairness on the part of the employer there is no desire to strike on the part of the men ...we are opposed to sympathetic and foolish strikes." (*Seventy Years*, p. 286.)

Observe in what followed, the strategy of Gompers, and of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy. It had apparently led a fight for the workers, and was recognized as a leader. It was as treacherous as the K. of L. gang, but infinitely wiser.

A new wave of separate craft strikes swept the country in 1887 and 1888. Nothing could stand against this determination to struggle, but it might be diverted into relatively harmless channels, to the advantage of treacherous leaders. At the St. Louis convention of the A. F. of L., in 1888, a motion was put through, this time for a general strike for the eight-hour day in 1890, on May First. The date was made significant by the glorious year of 1886. Gompers utilized the necessity of agitation and propaganda for this strike to put in the field the first crew of paid general organizers—forerunners of the McGrady's of a later day.

Through this machine, as through a radio hook-up, Gompers began in 1889 to spread pessimism—"Not ready yet." The con-

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vention of 1889 announced a wonderful new tactic. Instead of all striking at once, one union was to strike first, all the rest supporting it with finances, then another union, then others. This was the first step in open misleadership of the movement. Gompers also, as in the period of preparation for 1886, negotiated as many contracts as possible for the formal granting of the eight-hour day, in return for other concessions, such as no demands for more wages. This was to limit the force and scope of the strike. The carpenters did strike, and in general won their strike. But that was only one union. The miners were too weak to strike, the other unions having conveniently forgotten about financing them. The miners' strike was postponed until the next year, because "it was too late" that year. In the 1891 convention the bakers asked to take the place of the miners, but by this time the fine enthusiasm of the workers was being dissipated by these tactics. The A. F. of L. convention of 1891 felt itself strong enough to refuse to go on with the scheme, and the 1892 convention "was satisfied with issuing instructions to the executive council to carry on agitation for the eight-hour day." (Bimba, *History of the American Working Class*, p. 213.)

Here is an organized system of tactics of betrayal—in fact, a whole strategy! Consider its use in the upholsterers' strike this year in Kensington, Pa., in the Elizabethton strike in 1929, in the hosiery strikes. When the spirit of the workers rises too high to buck directly, the accomplished misleader places himself at the head of the movement, but finds a way to delay, to split the efforts, to interpose legalistic obstacles, jurisdictional difficulties, and finally, when the workers are worn down, torn with doubt and carefully cultivated pessimism, the misleader can come out openly and smash the bolder ones who remain true to the original plan. To be sure, in these later days, the A. F. of L. officialdom feels able by its alliance with the government and the employers, and in the absence of other organizations of great strength, simply to refuse the right to strike and offer to supply scabs if there is an outlaw strike. Lewis and Boylan simply denounced the strike of 25,000 Glen Alden anthracite miners this year. But the little fakers in the miners' general grievance committee, whose position is not so good —they use the old tactics of 1890; they take the lead of the action which they cannot prevent, then they delay, maneuver, dissuade, divide, discourage and eventually completely betray.

But the strike of 1886, and the first agitation for the strike in 1890, the first and second May Days, as we know May Day, rang round the world. It was a foregone conclusion that the International Workingmen's Congress, which met in Paris, July 14 to 20, 1889, would take up the matter. This congress re-established the

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socialist international, creating the Second International, the First International having come to an end in 1876. (It died in Philadelphia, by the way, another American angle.)

This Paris congress of 1889 passed a resolution which made the May First demonstrations a formal, international anniversary. The resolution was introduced by the French delegation, which numbered 291 out of a congress of some 400 delegates from 26 countries. The minutes of the congress, as brought to Germany and published in 1890 by Wilhelm Liebknecht, record under the date of July 20:

> "Citizen Levine then brought in, in the name of the National Association of Councils of French Unions and Cooperative Groups, a proposition for a great demonstration which the decision of the congress would help to carry through.
>
> "The motion read: 'The Congress decides to organize a great international demonstration, so that in all countries and in all cities on one appointed day the toiling masses shall demand of the state authorities the legal reduction of the working day to eight hours, as well as the carrying out of other decisions of the Paris Congress. Since a similar demonstration has already been decided upon for May 1, 1890, by the American Federation of Labor at its convention in St. Louis, December, 1888, this day is accepted for the international demonstration. The workers of the various countries must organize this demonstration according to the conditions prevailing in each industry.'"

There are two stories as to how this resolution came to be introduced.

Gompers, writing his memoirs quite recently, but with the light of the world war shining from every line, gives one version:

> "As plans of the eight hour movement developed, we were constantly realizing how we could widen our purpose. As the time for the meeting of the International Workingmen's Congress in Paris (July 14, 1889) approached, it occured to me that we could aid our movement by an expression of world-wide sympathy from that congress.
>
> "I talked the idea over with Hugh McGregor who was idealist enough to recognize no practical difficulties. The margin of time intervening was too small to trust a letter of invitation to the mail, so McGregor agreed to act as special courier. His wants were few and accustomed to all kinds of delays in gratification. We discovered that a boat was leaving within a brief time that would just get him to Paris in time. McGregor went off to pack his bag with a few things, including a reserve celluloid collar. Meanwhile I was to write a letter of official invitation and to meet him at the dock. I wrote by hand a letter that seemed to be to be fraught with historic import, and then hurried to the dock to put it in McGregor's custody. A number of labor men had learned of the trip. They hailed me afar, for the boat was on the point of leaving. I thrust the letter in McGregor's hand and joined the farewell shout.

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> "A moment afterwards I recollected that in my hurry I had failed to make a press copy of the letter. Though I tried in many ways to get a copy of that letter, I did not succeed. It is the only important official letter of which I did not retain a copy. Later I made unsuccessful efforts to obtain a copy through French friends.
>
> "My letter informed the Paris congress of our American efforts to celebrate the coming May Day by establishing eight hours for the carpenters and urged them to co-operate. The proposal fell upon the ears of two bitterly warring factions. The German delegation, headed by Liebknecht, Bebel and Singer, opposed the resolution on the ground that under the imperial German government it would be suicide for them to approve the movement. Herr Liebknecht emphatically opposed the proposal on the ground that labor organizations were not strong enough to succeed in the undertaking. Eventually a resolution for an eight-hour demonstration in every country was adopted, and there was pretty general observance of the day. That was the origin of European May Day, which has become a regular institution in all European countries." (*Seventy Years*, pp. 296-298.)

There is no indication in the minutes of the Paris Congress of this terrible attack by Liebknecht and Bebel. Perhaps the world war colored Gompers' memory a little?

The minutes do record that when the resolution for world demonstrations on May 1, 1890, was brought in, the Belgian delegation demanded a vote by countries, and that the Belgian delegates voted against the resolution, promising to explain the vote later. The inference was that they would support the movement, but because of laws at home, did not want to be on record. The Russian delegation, led by Plekhanov (remember how he ended!) opposed the resolution, frankly on the ground that they were sure no such demonstration would be allowed in Russia. The others all voted for it.

As for Liebknecht's reputed opposition, he wrote an introduction to the minutes of the 1899 International Workingmen's Congress. The introduction is dated June 2, 1890, approximately a year after the congress was held, and of course, a month after the May First of 1890.

Liebknecht explains how he brought the minutes to Germany and translated them, and then in a kind of climax to the introduction he says:

> "That it was no mere fire of straw that the congress lighted, has been proved by the First of May of this year; the first powerful, in fact, the *first* action of the proletariat all around the globe—the proletariat that the year before had established its federation of peace, freedom and equality."

Hugh McGregor does not appear in the minutes at all.

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In the minutes it is recorded that on the second day of the congress,

> "Citizen George M. Hugh," (Is this McGregor?) "read a declaration of sympathy from the American Federation of Labor, signed by President Samuel Gompers, which contained a declaration that the federation was too deeply involved in struggles through the eight-hour-day movement to be able to send a representative to the congress, and which recommended a merging with the Possibilist congress, and the greatest care in all decisions to be adopted."

These "Possibilists" were a group outside the Paris congress and to the right of it.

Is this the letter of which Gompers unfortunately forgot to make a copy, but which seemed to him to "be fraught with historic import"? Is that why Gompers' account is so different from most of the dry as dust stuff he writes, is clothed instead with what begins to remind one of what Koko in *The Mikado* calls "an air of artistic versimilitude"? The letter as reported in the minutes sounds more like Gompers than does the version in the autobiography.

Who spoke for the A. F. of L., who delivered that "invitation" to support by world demonstration the eight-hour-day strike of the carpenters, in 1890, that Gompers speaks about?

The minutes show that several reports on the American situation were made, one by Busche of the Socialist Labor Party, on July 18, which denounced the theory of exceptionalism even at that early date and made the point that the American workers suffer and face the same problems as all workers in countries where large industry prevails, although as far as repressive laws are concerned, the United States differed from Europe in that these laws were many and as varied as the states, instead of being centralized through the national government as in Europe.

It remained for the delegate Kirchner, of the United German Unions of New York, to make the argument for the A. F. of L. Kirchner spoke on July 19, described the living conditions in America, the tenement houses, knocked out the idea that American streets were paved with gold, and continued:

> "In my opinion, the most important organization and the one which holds out the greatest hope for the future is the American Federation of Labor, which is made up of unions whose spirit and tendency reminds one of the old English trade unions. The labor movement fights still on the ground of the wages system, that is, it seeks a reduction of working time and a raising of the wages.
>
> "This federation has taken the initiative in a movement which lately has again begun in favor of the eight-hour normal working

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> day. To me it seems without a doubt that the very intelligent leaders of this organization have realized the insufficiency of the goal which we have just now stated. But they consider it too early to go further in the direction of socialism."

Then the optimistic Kirchner goes on to expose the mercenary character of the leaders of the Knights of Labor, just then in deadly conflict with the A. F. of L. Kirchner damns the grand master workman of the K. of L. as a heartless robber because he took a salary of $5,000 a year from the pockets of the members of the organization. Which, without doubt, was a correct criticism. But if Kirchner could only have foreseen some of the salaries which the heads of A. F. of L. unions were to demand and get! *

There followed later a period when the Second International devitalized May First as it did the whole labor movement. Most of us can remember the socialist May Days, the anarchist and I. W. W. May Days, in which the whole struggle was burlesqued in a picnic, where, in some hired city park, the dance music was stopped long enough for an orator to rise and say: "Comrades! (or "Fellow Workers!" or "Brothers!") May Day is a beautiful day. As the sap rises in the trees in the spring, bringing the promise of blossoms bursting out, so the courage of the workers rises on this old religious holiday, sure to flower in due time into the glorious summer of the co-operative commonwealth," etc. With the advent of the Communist International, the militant workers changed all that.

But even in the socialist period, the day had its occasional struggles. The seething Russian masses, more than once in revolution or near revolution, held a demonstration in 1901 which brought forth from Lenin one of his most penetrating analyses of the significance of such anniversary events. He says:

> "The Kharkov May Day celebrations illustrate how the celebration of a labor holiday can become a great political demonstration and they reveal what it is we lack to make these celebrations a really great all-Russian demonstration of the class-conscious proletariat. What made the May Day celebrations in Kharkov an event of outstanding importance? The mass participation of the workers in the strike, the huge mass meetings in the streets, the unfurling of red flags, the presentation of demands indicated in leaflets and the revolutionary character of these demands—eight-hour day and po-

* The whole question of Gompers' relations with the Paris Congress and Gompers' alleged part in bringing about the international celebration of May First needs further study for which there is not time as this article is written. Some one should go over the labor papers of the time, and investigate the French and German literature on the subject.—V. S.

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litical liberty. The legend that the Russian workers have not sufficiently grown up for the political struggle, that their principal duty is to conduct the purely economic struggle, and only slowly and very gradually supplement it by partial agitation, for partial political reforms; that they must not take up the struggle against the whole of the political system of Russia—that legend has been totally refuted by the Kharkov May Day celebrations."

In the same article Lenin says:

"Demands for wage increases and better treatment can be and ought to be presented by the workers to the employers in each separate trade.... The demand for an eight-hour day, however, is the demand of the whole proletariat, presented, not to individual employers, but to the government as the representative of the whole of the present-day social and political system, to the capitalist system as a whole, the owners of all the means of production. The demand for an eight-hour day has assumed special significance. It is a declaration of solidarity with the international Socialist movement. We must make the workers understand this difference, and prevent them from reducing it to the level of demands like free tickets, or the dismissal of watchmen. Throughout this year, the workers, first in one place and then in another, continuously present a variety of partial demands to their employers and fight for these demands. In assisting the workers in this fight, Communists must always explain the connection it has with the proletarian struggle for emancipation in all countries. The First of May must be the day on which the workers solemnly declare that they realize this connection and resolutely join in the struggle."

These words were never more true than they are today, as applied to the United States. What Lenin says about the eight-hour-day demand can be said also of the demand for the right to live, of the demands against starvation, of the demand for unemployment relief.

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Comintern Documents

Directives of the Politsecretariat of the ECCI to the Communist Party of the USA relative to the decisions of the Twelfth Plenum of the CPUSA

January 31, 1931.

TO THE CC CPUSA.

DEAR COMRADES:

The Political Secretariat of the ECCI recognizes that the CC at its 12th Plenum has with determination taken a course towards mass work, and endorses the main line of the resolution adopted. The Political Secretariat emphasises that the resolutions today are only on paper, and having in mind the seriousness of the situation, regards as the most important task of the CC the mobilization of its energies to obtain concrete results in the nearest future in carrying the resolutions into life. It directs the CC to concentrate its attention particularly upon the following next tasks:

1. *The main task of the Party at the present time is the organization of the mass struggles against unemployment.* At the moment, the chief campaign against unemployment is the rallying of the masses for the struggle on International Unemployment Day—February 25th—(for which special directives have already been sent you), but following this day the work must be energetically followed up and systematically carried through.

(a) The Party must strive with full determination to build Unemployment Committees, elected by the workers at the unemployment agencies, mass breadlines, and other gathering points of the unemployed, and to unite these committees into Unemployment Councils, according to sections of the city. Recruiting of individual members into unemployed branches must likewise take place and committees of those branches must be represented in the Unemployed Councils. Councils must likewise include representatives of the workers in the factories, the revolutionary trade unions, and other mass organizations.

(b) The Unemployed Councils must fight for immediate relief from the state, at the expense of the military, police, and secret service budget, and by tax upon the employers, but must at the same time set up their own organs to secure housing for unemployed

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workers, as for instance, specified public schools, to develop mass struggles against the evictions of unemployed workers, and to fight for food for the children of the unemployed, etc.

(c) The Unemployed Councils must investigate and present concrete material in the press, before workers' meetings, through deputations to city bodies, etc., on the devastating situation among the unemployed families, and must continuously expose the miserable treatment of the unemployed workers, and propose concrete measures capable of rallying the unemployed for struggle for their relief. The Unemployed Councils must also collect funds together with the WIR, cooperative, and fraternal bodies, for the establishment of relief kitchens for their own members, as a means of consolidating and strengthening the Councils of the Unemployed.

(d) The slogans for the fight against unemployment are given by the Five-Party Conference of January. The main slogan must be: Unemployment insurance at the expense of the state and employers. While calling the masses of the employed and unemployed to fight for unemployment insurance *at full wages*, and while exposing all parties of the bourgeoisie and the A. F. of L., who oppose insurance and are for private charity, our Party shall not create the impression that it calls upon the distressed workers to refuse benefits even of charity relief. At the same time, the Party must, by means of concrete facts, actually expose the complete insufficiency, rotten food and methods of raising relief funds (virtual taxation of the workers).

The demand must be put forward that all unemployed relief funds should be distributed by unemployment organizations, and the harsh treatment, wastefulness, corruption, etc., of the present relief distributing agencies must be exposed.

(e) For the strengthening of the work among the unemployed, the Party must carefully instruct the District Committees in regard to the line and policy, and in turn the district leadership must instruct their functionaries on the carrying through of the struggle, and must see to it that capable forces are assigned to the work of the Unemployed Councils and that at least one organizer and one agitator are assigned to each unemployment agency and mass breadline. The revolutionary unions and other mass organizations must be drawn actively into the struggle against unemployment. Serious efforts must be made to draw the A. F. of L. local unions and especially the unemployed members of the A. F. of L. into the fight.

(f) The fight for unemployment insurance, as well as the struggle for social insurance as a whole, must be turned into a real mass struggle in accordance with the October resolution of the

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ECCI. The demands must be more clearly formulated and real efforts be made to draw the workers into the discussion and final formulation of the demands. The demands must be continually carried in our press, explained and popularized to the masses, and contrasted with the various proposals now being made by bourgeois parties and social reformists which must be subjected to a comprehensive and penetrating criticism and exposure. The fight for unemployment insurance must be more prominently linked up with the day to day struggle, with mass demonstrations, strikes, etc., and with the fight for immediate relief. The signature campaign must be more widely developed, particularly by building committees for the collection of signatures in the factories and in the neighborhoods. In order to clarify the fight for unemployment insurance and to explain to the masses our program in a popular way, it would be useful to issue a pamphlet on unemployment insurance for mass circulation.

2. *The Central Committee must bend its energies to accomplish a turn towards mass work in the trade union field.* The Party from top to bottom must take up trade union questions and give directions and see to the carrying out of them *through its fractions* in the trade unions. The Party, which has to concern itself with every question of working class struggle, must not supplant the work of the trade unions and must not transgress upon the democracy of the trade union organizations.

(a) The decisions of the V Congress of the RILU and of the Plenum of the TUUL must be discussed in the revolutionary trade unions and the next tasks concretely worked out by these unions in the application of these decisions.

(b) The CC must as its *next immediate tasks* give its main attention to improving the leadership and day to day functioning of the Miners, Automobile, Metal, Textile, and Marine unions, and must strengthen the work of the Party organizations in the centers in which these industries are chiefly located, especially Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit, and Cleveland districts. The New York district must give its main attention *at the present time* to improving the situation in the Marine, Needle Trades Union, and Texile unions.

(c) Through sending representatives of the CC and of leading functionaries, assistance must be given to the Party fractions in these unions, to the district organizations, and to the lower units in working out the methods and forms suitable to the local conditions and factories for organizing the workers into the revolutionary unions and for initiating mass struggles against the offensive of the bourgeoisie.

(d) Energetic steps must be taken to bring the membership of

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the Party into the revolutionary unions, to organize them into well functioning fractions, which must assign definite tasks to the Party members and which must improve their work in the unions.

3. *The Political Secretariat stresses the immediate importance of commencing work to organize the agrarian proletariat and poor farmers.* The severe economic crisis, which grows worse from month to month, and which has given rise to a number of strikes of the agricultural proletariat, and to local armed demonstrations of poor farmers for relief, and which has expressed itself in increased support of the farmers to the Communists in the elections, demands that the Party seize the present opportunity for establishing its influence among the farm workers and poor farmers. For this purpose it is necessary as the next tasks:

(a) To hasten the steps for the transformation of the *United Farmer* into a popular mass organ, published in Chicago.

(b) To organize groups around the paper.

(c) To strengthen the revolutionary union of the agricultural workers.

(d) To set up committees of poor farmers, also among the Negroes, where there are favorable opportunities, and carry through struggles for their immediate interests.

(e) To take measures to clarify the Party in regard to the tasks and slogans in our agrarian work, and to complete the working out of an agrarian program.

4. *For the carrying out of these immediate tasks, the CC must planfully and under strict control* carry out a series of measures:

(a) Strengthen the local leadership in the main industrial centers—Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Cleveland, to organize the unemployed, build up the revolutionary unions, and establish well-functioning factory nuclei and shop papers in the most important factories, develop the initiative of the local comrades, and to enliven the work of the lower units and to activize the membership. For this purpose the CC must send a majority of its capable forces (including from among the Politburo, Central Committee, Control Commission, co-workers of the CC, and other forces from the New York district) chiefly into these basic centers.

The Party leadership shall report in two months on what decisions and steps it has taken in the realization of this instruction.

(b) The CC must clarify by popular articles in the press, by discussion of district "actives," discussion in the units, the immediate tasks of the Party, and shall constantly teach in such clarification and discussion how the tasks are to be carried out. It must above all bring to the Party examples of good work in the respective

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fields of activity, shall criticize by *specific* examples the weaknesses, shortcomings, and deviations, concentrating in this task upon the unemployment and trade union work.

In accordance with the October resolution of the ECCI, the CC must carry through measures for improving the *Daily Worker*, particularly in making it an organizer and mobilizer in the struggle against unemployment, in building the revolutionary trade unions, in effecting a turn in the work toward the factories.

The *Daily Worker* must be more firmly controlled by the CC, which must insist upon more systematically, steadfastly, and perseveringly keeping in the foreground of its agitation the main tasks of the Party, concentrating at present upon the above stated tasks and presenting its agitation to the masses in a more popular way. At the same time, the Party must establish firmer control over the language press and must see to it that its agitation is in line with that of the *Daily Worker* so that the entire Party press may become a real force in the mobilization and organization of the workers particularly for economic struggle.

The Political Secretariat considers it necessary to correct the estimation of the present political situation in the United States given by the Plenum. The Plenum resolution contains confusing and incorrect formulation about "the development of the various elements of a political crisis." It would be wrong to draw a distinction between a political crisis and a revolutionary situation, and therefore, it is incorrect to speak of an approach of a revolutionary situation in the United States. Such an incorrect estimation of the situation is bound to slide over into tactical errors. The estimation of the situation in the United States as one of a severe economic crisis which is sharpening the contradictions of American capitalism, given in the October resolution of the ECCI, still remains in force, and has been borne out by subsequent events.

The Party must widen its mass agitation on the basis of the day to day events and the struggles for partial demands. Instead of putting forward such incorrect slogans as "Death to the bankers," which detract it from its mass agitation to expose the capitalist system, the Party must more comprehensively and popularly expose the nature of the capitalist system as a whole and the necessity for overthrowing it. It must make use of all current events (oppression in the factory, unemployment, police brutality, oppression of Negro workers and foreign born, corruption in government, war preparations) in order to expose the whole system and mobilize the masses in its struggle against capitalism. The Party must direct its fight more against the two main parties of the bourgeois, the Republican

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and Democratic parties, and show itself to the proletariat as the only anti-capitalist party, exposing the American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Party as aids of the bourgeoisie in carrying through the offensive of the capitalist class and in maintaining the capitalist system. At the same time the Party must unfold more its *propaganda* showing the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

POLIT SECRETARIAT OF THE ECCI.

Decision of the Polit-Commission of the ECCI on the Question of the Hour Slogan in the United States
(*January* 31, 1931)

The Party must not alter the general slogan on hours which must be "Seven-hour day, six hours for dangerous trades and for youth." In some industries in which at present the eight-hour day, five-day week prevails, the slogan of the "Seven-hour day, five-day week" may be put forward.

In the industries and factories, as for example in the South where the 10- and 12-hour day are in force, the Party may in some places put forward the demand for the eight-hour day, at the same time avoiding a situation where for the white workers the seven-hour day is demanded and for Negro workers the demand is for the eight-hour day.

The A. F. of L. and the Socialists are raising the shorter work day slogan in accord with the stagger plan and other hours policy of the bourgeoisie, aimed chiefly at reducing the wages and living standards of the workers and avoiding social insurance, and the Party must expose them on this basis. This does not mean that the Party must stand aside from the movement for the shorter workday and limit itself to mere exposures of the burocrats. The task of the Party must be on the basis of the united front tactic to take the leadership of the shorter workday movement from the hands of the burocrats, putting in the center of the campaign the questions of wage cuts and other slogans directed toward developing a real mass movement from below for struggle and showing to the workers that the A. F. of L. burocrats put forward the shorter workday slogans in order to agree to the corresponding wage cuts.

Resolution of the Polit-Committee of the ECCI Regarding the Putting into Effect of the Resolution of the ECCI on the Negro Question in the U. S. A.

The Party must take the leading role in the struggle for all rights of the Negroes, drawing into this struggle all organizations

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under its influence, and uniting in the struggle Negro and white workers. "It is advisable for the Communist Party in the North to abstain from the establishment of any special Negro organizations, and in place of this to bring the black and white workers together *in common organizations of struggle and joint action. Effective* steps must be taken for the organization of Negro workers in the TUUL and revolutionary unions." (ECCI resolution on Negro Question in U. S.)

The task of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights must be to aid in immediately establishing and building the *Liberator* as a popular mass organ, developing workers' correspondents, etc., and to act as an auxiliary of the Party in drawing Negro and white workers into the struggle for Negro rights. At no time must the League of Struggle for Negro Rights be considered as a substitute for the Party or revolutionary unions, and the Communist Party must strongly combat any tendencies to relegate the struggle for Negro rights to the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, such as have already been manifested in certain articles appearing in the *Daily Worker*.

POLIT-COMMISSION OF THE ECCI.

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On the Use of "Transmission Belts" In Our Struggle for the Masses

By C. A. HATHAWAY

"What is the reason that in spite of the fairly good response of the unemployed workers to our slogans, demands and actions, we do not develop a real organized mass movement of the unemployed workers?

"*Because we have no real organized Unemployed Councils.* Our Councils are too loose. Thousands and thousands of workers join and leave. No membership meetings are held and, because of this, the Councils do not have any elected leaders. We have no functioning fractions in the Councils. The Party's guidance in the Unemployed Councils consists of nothing but one comrade bringing down instructions of the Communist Party to the unemployed workers." —From the March 26th organization bulletin of the New York District.

* * * *

THIS extremely sharp indictment of our unemployment work, presented in the form of a reply to his own question, was written by a leading New York comrade. It was written, please note, just 18 months—*a year and one-half*—after the outbreak of the present severe economic crisis which brought misery, hunger and starvation to millions of American workers. It was written a month after International Unemployment Day (February 25th) this year, the preparations for which should have marked a decisive change for the better in our work among the unemployed.

Was this comrade mistaken in his indictment? Did he paint too gloomy a picture? In the main, I think not! With a few rare exceptions, here and there, his statements are corect. We have not yet real, organized Unemployed Councils. Those that we have —again with a few exceptions—function too loosely, without regular membership meetings, without real leadership, without Party fractions, and without real Party guidance and direction.

Is this state of affairs confined to the New York District of which this comrade wrote? I think not! Reports from Pittsburgh, Detroit, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and elsewhere indicate that this is quite a general situation. They indicate that the localities which can boast of well functioning Councils that lead broad mass movements of unemployed workers are still decidedly scarce.

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ANSWER NEEDED FOR WHOLE PARTY

The question raised by the comrade writing in the New York organization bulletin must be quite fully answered, therefore, not only for New York, but for the whole Party.

> *"What is the reason that in spite of the fairly good response of the unemployed workers to our slgans, demands and actions, we do not develop a real organized mass movement of the unemployed workers?"*

The comrade, not incorectly when his purpose is considered, placed the emphasis, in replying, on our organizational shortcomings.

There are, of course, also serious political shortcomings—too general slogans, working out of slogans without consultation with the workers, insufficient attention to local issues of vital concern to the unemployed, weak and unsystematic exposures of the charity organizations and of the demagogy of the bourgeoisie and reformists, insufficient continuity and persistence in our work, failure in time to see the need for directly undertaking relief in acute cases of suffering, bureaucratic tendencies and failure to develop the initiative of the workers themselves, many opportunist conceptions of both the Right and "Left" variety, etc. These, together with the organizational shortcomings enumerated in the bulletin, are certainly very major reasons for our failure to develop "a real organized mass movement of the unemployed workers."

But there is still a most vital question to be answered!

Why, after a year and one-half of acute unemployment, during which time we have repeatedly pointed out and attempted to correct, most of these weaknesses and shortcomings, have we not made greater progress on the road towards self-correction?

Without answering this question, any effort to solve either the organizational or political shortcomings enumerated becomes mere patch work. And the answer to this question raises basic problems for the Party. It raises problems which concern not only the work among the unemployed but also every other field of work. The same question could be put with regard to our trade union work, our Negro work, etc. Everywhere, in every field, we are face to face with the problem: *Why are we only to a very limited extent successful in the development of broad, organized mass struggles against the brutal and vicious bourgeois offensive?*

SOME PROGRESS MADE

By putting the question so sharply one should not conclude that no progress has been made. Such conclusions could only be harmful

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to the Party and interfere with the serious job of self-corection now ahead of us. In the three major fields of Party work, unemployment, trade union, and Negro, definite progress has been made, especially since the arrival of the latest Comintern directives early in February. In textile (Lawrence) and mining (Pittsburgh, anthracite) very marked improvement is to be noted. The character of the demands raised, the preparatory organizational work, and the conduct of the strike struggles in each of these instances show that the lessons of past experiences are being learned.

In a number of cities, notably the smaller industrial towns, Unemployed Councils have been established which are carrying on a persistent and effective struggle against unemployment.

In Negro work only now is the Party really beginning to develop the broad mass struggle for Negro rights (Scottsboro case, Greenville, District 17, etc.), making this a part of the mass struggles against wage cuts and the speed-up and for unemployment insurance.

The most notable achievements, however, are still to be found within the Party—stabilization of the Party membership, increase in dues payments, improvement of the Party composition, beginning of planned work, more serious consideration to our defects in mass work, etc.

These achievements, while still extremely limited, are particularly characteristic of only the past three months, are not yet common to the entire Party, and do not as yet invalidate the following extremely sharp characterization of the Party's work contained in the *Pravda* editorial, "In the Footsteps of Lenin," of January 21st, this year:

> "The day-to-day work of the Communist Party, U. S. A., still bears a purely propaganda character. The Party has as yet come out before the masses only with *general* slogans, failing to concentrate attention on the *immediate*, every-day demands of the masses. The trade unions have, in fact, only *duplicated the Party*. The result of all this has been a considerable *weakening of the Party's contact with the masses, passivity, and lagging behind* the general mass movement, and a consequent *strengthening of opportunist tendencies, especially the Right Danger, in the various sections of the Party*." (April *Communist*, page 296.)

TO BUILD MASS PARTY IS PROBLEM

This statement, "*The day-to-day work of the Communist Party U. S. A. still bears a purely propaganda character,*" brings us back to our basic problem. We are still a propaganda Party; we have not yet become a Bolshevik mass Party. The achievements which

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have been made have been chiefly of a routine character, *i, e.*, improvements in our work *as a propaganda Party*, but not yet the transformation of our Party into a *mass Party*.

Already in the Open Letter of the Communist International to our Party in May, 1929, and again in the C. I. Address of a few months later, the urgent need for rapidly transforming our Party from a propaganda Party to a mass Party was strongly emphasized. Since then, in one form or another, the burning need for such a transformation has been many times repeated. *But we are still a propaganda Party!*—and we proceed on the road toward becoming a mass Party only at a snail's pace.

The reason—*the basic reason*—why we have not made greater progress during the past 18 months (the crisis period) in overcoming our weaknesses and shortcomings and in progressing more rapidly on the road toward becoming a mass Party in the Leninist sense is because we did not fully grasp the significance of the change which we had to make. The membership was driven harder and harder; more work was done than ever before, but we did see the need of changing thoroughly *our methods of work* from top to bottom.

We accepted too much as a mere phrase the Comintern's directives without really considering in a concrete manner just what these directives meant. We proceeded with the best of intentions, but in a vague, groping, unplanned and confused manner. We tried first one method and then another without clearly asking ourselves what we wanted or how we were going to get it. Phrases too often became a substitute for a thorough examination of our problems.

UTILIZE TRANSMISSION BELTS

What must we do?

In the first place we must break definitely with the conception that Communist work consists solely in direct efforts to build the Communist Party and in recruiting new members. *We must learn to set up and work through a whole series of mass organizations and in this way also develop our Party work.* Our chief error is our failure to understand the role of and to systematically utilize mass organizations (T. U. U. L., Unemployed Councils, I. L. D., W. I. R., L. S. N. R., etc.) *as transmission belts* to the broad masses of non-Party workers. The Communist Party is necessarily composed of the most conscious and self-sacrificing elements among the workers. These mass organizations, on the contrary, with a correct political line, can be made to reach many thousands of workers not yet prepared for Party membership. Through these organizations,

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led by well-functioning Party fractions, the Party must necessarily find its best training and recruiting ground. They are the medium through which the Party, on the one hand, guides and directs the workers in their struggles and, on the other hand, keeps itself informed on the mood of the masses, the correctness of Party slogans, etc.

Comrade Piatnitsky, speaking at the 10th Plenum of E. C. C. I. on the methods of organizationally consolidating the growing political influence of the various Parties of the Comintern, stated:

> "How can the growing influence of the Parties be consolidated? By good work on the part of the Party organizations, by close contact with the masses. What is the best way of establishing this contact? *By Communist work in the workers' and peasants' mass organizations* (factory committees, trade unions, workers' cooperatives and sport organizations, I. R. A., Free Thinkers' organizations, W.I.R., provisional organizations, mainly strike committees, anti-lock-out committees), *by the work of Party nulcei in enterprises.*" (My emphasis—C. A. H.)

Comrade Kuusinen, speaking on the organization report at the 6th Plenum of the E. C. C. I., dealt even more fully with this method of developing our Communist work.

> "The carrying out of the task of winning over the masses of the proletariat for the proletarian revolution," he said, "calls forth a *certain one-sidedness* among a section of our Party membership. According to the view of these comrades, Communist work consists solely of building up Communist Party organizations, and in recruiting new members. This is, of course, one of our fundamental tasks. *It would, however, be entirely wrong to suppose that it is fluence of our Party (not under mechanical leadership.)*" (My em- C. A. H.)

A SOLAR SYSTEM OF ORGANIZATIONS

Later on in the same speech, Comrade Kuusinen says:

> " The *first part of our task* is to build up, not only Communist organizations, but other organizations as well, *above all* mass organizations sympathizing with our aims, and able to aid us for special purposes. . . . *We must create a whole solar system of organizations and smaller committees around the Communist Party, so to speak, smaller organizations working actually under the influence of our Party (not under mechanical leadership.)*" (My emphasis—C. A. H.)

Finally Comrade Kuusinen energetically opposed, as a serious deviation, the tendency to consider mass work as "not real Communist work."

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> "In any case," he declared, "we most energetically oppose that deviation which regards work among the masses, and the organization of this work, as being not real Communist work, and considers that Party work is only to be carried on in our own midst, while work among outsiders is of secondary importance. No,—*for the majority of the members of the Party the main sphere of Party work is the organization of the non-Party, syndicalist and even social democratic workers.*" (My emphasis—C. A. H.)

I have quoted at length to show, in the first place, that (to again use the words of Kuusinen) "the chief object of our attention should be the organization of the daily revolutionary detail work of every individual comrade *among the masses.*" *The work of our comrades and units must be conducted in such a way that everywhere (in the factories, among the unemployed, among the Negroes, etc.) we set up various organized groups under our influence and through which our comrades work. These groups, in turn, must be the instruments through which still greater masses of workers are organized for revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie.* It is this principle of "*transmission belts*" (organized committees and groups—Unemployed Councils, T. U. U. L., L. S. N. R., etc.—under Party influence) which must be firmly established in our Party *as the means for our transformation from a propaganda Party to a Bolshevik mass Party.*

COMRADE STALIN ON "TRANSMISSION BELTS"

Comrade Stalin, in his *Problems of Leninism*, puts this need for "*transmission belts*," and their relationship to the Party still more sharply. He says (pages 29 and 30):

> "The proletariat needs these belts, these levers, (the mass organizations—C. A. H.) and this guiding force (the Party—C.A.H.), because without them it would, in its struggle for victory, be like a weaponless army in the face of organized and armed capital. . . .
>
> "Lastly we come to the *Party* of the proletariat, the proletarian vanguard. *Its strength lies in the fact that it attracts to its ranks the best elements of all the mass organizations of the proletariat.* Its function is to *unify* the work of all the mass organizations of the proletariat, without exception, and to *guide* their activities toward a single end, that of the liberation of the proletariat."

Comrade Stalin also quotes Comrade Lenin as follows: "*The dictatorship (of the proletariat) cannot be effectively realized without "belts" to transmit power from the vanguard to the mass of the advanced class, and from this to the mass of those who labor.*"

From all this it is clear that the setting up, maintaining, and systematic utilization of such "*transmission belts*" are essential pre-

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requisites for the transformation of our Party from a propaganda Party to a Bolshevik Party of action. Yet, due primarily to a gross underestimation of the need for such organizations, and to lack of knowledge of how to carry on general *Party Work* through such organizations (mobilization for May Day, the Scottsboro case, etc.), our revolutionary trade unions today are but little larger than the Party, the Unemployed Councils are still extremely feeble, and the L. S. N. R., except in a few cities, is almost non-existent.

CORRECT THEORY; WRONG PRACTICE

Many comrades may say that there is nothing new about this. Quite correct! This principle of organization is as old as the Bolshevik movement itself! Every leading comrade, at least, understands it in theory.

But what about our practice?

To again return to our work among the unemployed. Is this principle applied in practice? We will take our answer from the New York org-bulletin:

> "We have no functioning fractions in the Councils," says the comrade. "The Party's guidance . . . consists of nothing but *one comrade* bringing down instructions (!) of the Communist Party to the unemployed workers."

Comrade Weiner, in his report to the Politburo on Party work in the Pittsburgh District, also had the following to say on the work of the Party there among the unemployed:

> ". . . The splendid fight against evictions reduced considerably the great number of evictions in that section (Hill District, Pittsburg—C. A. H.). This result, instead of stimulating the activities and the building of Unemployed Councils had the opposite effect. *The groups were not provided with leadership, the Party did not pay sufficient attention to the work of the Unemployed Councils and they gradually died out.*

These experiences from New York and Pittsburgh are common to the entire Party. During the past year, in every locality, Councils have been built and rebuilt. In preparation for March 6th, a year ago, Councils were set up. They lived for only a few weeks. Before July 4th they were again established only to die out again after the Chicago convention. The same was true of September 1st, August 1st, and February 25th. We have not learned to establish Councils and then conduct both their work and that of the Party in such a manner as to give continued leadership and

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thereby life to the Councils. The same can be said with regard to our work in other mass organizations. None of them are systematically used to broaden the Party's organiational influence and to extend the struggle against the bosses with all our forces.

LACK OF DIRECTION AND LEADERSHIP

Of course the political and organizational factors cited at the beginning of the article are very major reasons for the weaknesses of the Unemployed Councils, but I am convinced that *the major reason* (which also is a direct cause for most of the other weaknesses enumerated) is the lack of real Party direction and leadership through Party fractions in the Councils. This, in turn, is due largely to the fact that our comrades and the lower Party units are not trained to make work in mass organizations such as the Unemployed Councils a task second only to the building of shop nuclei in the largest factories. One could go as far now as to say that there is an almost complete lack of contact between the Unemployed Councils and the Party, and even between the Party members and the unemployed workers. Certainly our Party work is not planned in such a way as to *regularly* and *continuously* bring our members into association with the unemployed workers. With this almost complete lack of contact with, or knowledge of the day-to-day problems of the unemployed, Party decisions are made and applied in the most bureaucratic and mechanical manner.

Comrade Bedacht in reporting on the work in the Detroit District had the following to say:

> "The Unemployed Councils (in Detroit) lack a mass character and are not functioning bodies able to generate out of themselves through Communist initiative real mass action. There are one or two exceptions to this rule. One is the Council in Lincoln Park, the other is the Council in Port Huron. *It is instructive to know that both of these Councils are functioning in virgin territory and have a large percentage of native American workers in their ranks.* I am tempted to say that they function where there is no Party to choke them to death. I am fully aware of the sharpness of this formulation, and do not want to have its meaning interpreted in a general manner. *The fact is that our Party has not yet learned to function in a mass movement.* Our comrades are essentially afraid of the initiative of the masses. They do not allow an organization to function except on the basis of a preconceived plan brought down to them in the form of an order *and usually drawn up in cmplete ignorance of local conditions, issues and problems. Instead of inviting discussions and proposals out of the ranks of the worker, they stifle them.*" (My emphasis—C. A. H.)

Why is this so? Why do we have so little contact with the unemployed workers? Why do we have so little knowledge of

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their problems? Is it because of some personal traits in our Party

bers are separated from the unemployed workers! *It is due to the method of functioning of our Party, to endless inner-Party meetings, to the practice of developing our Party activities almost entirely outside of and not through these mass organizations.* As Comrade Bedacht correctly states, "our Party has not yet learned to function in (and I would add, *through*) a mass movement."

TOO MANY MEETINGS

In fact, by our present methods, our comrades have little or no time for direct work among the masses. In New York, for example (and New York is no exception), practically *every active Party member* spends all his time in meetings where good plans for mass work are made to the exclusion of all possibility of carrying out these plans. There are about 3,000 members of the Party in New York. Of this number, according to the District Organization Secretary, there are 700 direct Party functionaries, District, Section, and unit, not counting auxiliary functionaries which probably number several hundred more. The following is

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cause, as our New York comrade says, "No membership meetings (of the Councils) are held . . . (they) do not have any elected leaders." And as Comrade Weiner from Pittsburgh says, "The groups were not provided with leadership!" Comrade Bedacht sharply declares that we "do not allow an organization to function. . . ." Obviously, then, it is chiefly criminal neglect of the most elementary organizational work that causes the workers to leave the Councils. Or better said, our comrades do not know how to work in these organizations in such a way that both the work of these organizations and that of the Party is carried forward. The result is neglect of the mass organizations.

FAILURE TO USE ALL FORCES

Our Party members see this situation, but they plead a complete lack of time for this work, not to speak of energy. It arises, in my opinion, chiefly because we do not know how to use these mass organizations as "*transmission belts*" in our mass work. They stand in the way of our "Party work"—but only because we have not shown an understanding of how to develop effectively *methods of Party work*, which permits a full utilization of all mass organizations and their members to strengthen the Party's mass work. For example, in preparation for February 25th, International Unemployment Day, all efforts were concentrated on work among the unemployed. Unemployed Councils were for a time made to function. After February 25th there was a noticeable falling off in unemployed activity and a tendency to neglect unemployed work in order to concentrate on the factories. Now, in preparation for May First, instead of continued energetic work either among the unemployed or at the factories there appears to be a reversion back to simply leaflet distribution and general agitational work. Certainly the preparatory work does not show increased organizational activity among the unemployed.

Comrade Johnstone, writing in last month's COMMUNIST, cited another case of "united front" activity which reflects very clearly our continued failure to carry on systematic and continuous work in mass organizations as a means of broadening the workers' struggle. He says:

> "In New York City, quite a broad united front conference was formed by the T.U.U.L. and the Unemployed Council in support of the Unemployed movement, *but it never really functioned, never was utilized to a fraction of the degree that it was for*. . . . Again the Party, instead of using Party experience, Party knowledge, Party organization to broaden the united front, *proceeded to substitute for it.*"

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In the same way the Party "substitutes for" the T. U. U. L., the Unemployed Councils, and other mass organizations, with the result that we tend to liquidate these organizations, *and thereby seriously weaken ourselves, weaken our own organized influence among the workers.*

BEST WORK IN SMALL TOWNS

Comrade Bedacht's observations on Lincoln Park and Port Huron, the only successful Councils in Michigan, should be emphasized. He says:

> "It is interesting to know that both of these Councils are functioning in virgin territory."

Most of our most successful unemployed work in other parts of the country is *also in virgin territory*. In addition to Lincoln Park and Port Huron, one can cite the examples of Chester, Greenville, Ambridge, and Reading. All of these places are new territories for Party work.

THE READING EXPERIENCE

Reading is an excellent example of how "*transmission belts*" can be used. On January 28th the Party there had 7 members, almost wholly isolated from the masses. There were no Unemployed Councils, no Y. C. L., and no trade unions. Now, three months later by really concentrating on unemployed work, the Unemployed Council has 1,000 members with 600 paying dues regularly. A large portion of these are Negroes. Approximately 100 attend meetings every day and participate actively in every phase of the struggle for immediate relief, for unemployment insurance, and against the socialist party administration of the city. They have many successful struggles to their credit. Now, with the energetic aid of the unemployed workers who are members of the Unemployed Councils, the Party fraction is developing the work among the employed workers in the factories. After only three weeks' work many contacts have been made and two workers from each of 6 shops have been organized into committees of the Metal Workers Industrial League—that is, a beginning has been made, with 12 members. This shows, how by working *through* one mass organization utilizing the forces there, who have been won for the Party line in struggle, it is possible to extend the work of building other mass organizations which still further broaden the organized influence of the Party. A unit of the Y. C. L. has also been organized with

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4 members. And the Party membership has increased from 7, three months ago, to 32 now. (These figures are only up to April 1st; the number now is probably still greater.) And finally, the Party is now entering the election campaign there with the endorsement of Unemployed Councils which are energetically aiding in putting forward the Party candidates, securing the signatures, distributing literature, etc. From practically nothing three months ago, our Party has become a serious political factor in Reading.

Could the same results have been accomplished in Reading if our 7 Party members (the size of the unit three months ago) had carried on their work in the manner of a New York or Pittsburgh unit (leaflets, street meetings, etc.) without having drawn in the non-Party workers into the Unemployed Councils and secured their help in extending the work? Obviously not!

WHY THESE SUCCESSES?

Why do we have successes in Reading, Chester, Lincoln Park, Greenville, and Ambridge, and much more meager successes in New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and other old established Party centers? Chiefly because the Party work was caried on *around* and *through* the Unemployed Councils and the other mass organizations. The comrades there realized that Party work was not merely agitation, but also serious and continuous organization work among the workers. The Party, in these places, organized the workers in the Councils; it gave constant attention to the Councils; it drew the workers into the discussion of demands and slogans based on local issues (Greenville is an excellent example of this!) and into the preparation and carrying through of demonstrations and struggles also organized around local issues. These organizations and their members in turn were persuaded to directly aid the Party, as for example, in the Reading and Lincoln Park election campaigns. Through these activities workers were organized, trained, and disciplined; they were taught to respect the Party for its work; they were drawn into the Party as members. And members secured in such a manner are better members for the Party. They are recruited in the struggle, and not merely because they have listened to an agitational speech or read an agitational leaflet. These are the workers who will most likely remain with the Party. In the old Party centers there has been a persistent clinging to the old agitational methods, with no systematic continuous organizational work, no building and using of mass organization, such as was done here.

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THIS IS ROAD TO MASS PARTY

From these examples, Comrade Piatnitsky's statement at the 10th Plenum should become clear. His reply to the question, "*How can the growing influence of the Parties be consolidated?*" with the answer, "*By Communist work in the workers' and peasants' mass organizations, by the work of the Party nuclei in the enterprises!*" is proven to be fully correct by the Reading experiences, as well as by those in the other cities mentioned. And it is in this way—by building and working through the Unemployed Councils, the T. U. U. L., the L. S. N. R., etc., by building these organizations in the struggle, by recruiting the best, the most reliable workers for our Party—that our Party is to be really transformed from a propaganda Party to a Bolshevik mass Party. This is the only way that we can consolidate organizationally the increased influence which the Party undoubtedly now has among the workers.

But as I stated earlier, the cases such as Reading are still the very rare exception. The weaknesses of our unemployed work are chiefly due to this fact. Such cases must now become the rule on a much higher and more extensive plane. The question is, how to accomplish this? How are we to quickly overcome the inertia of the past and rapidly develop these methods of work in order to progress with greater speed on the road toward becoming a Bolshevik mass Party, capable of *organizing* and *leading* the every-day struggles of the employed and unemployed workers against the bourgeoisie for their partial demands, and utilizing these struggles to *prepare* and *organize* the workers for the struggle for power? In short, how are we to overcome our isolation from the masses?

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Obviously this cannot be answered with a phrase or a formula. It will require much hard and persistent work to re-orientate our Party in this direction. Both the Central Committee and the District Committees have the task of driving home the necessity of abandoning purely propaganda methods of work as represented by our almost complete failure to organize the hundreds of sympathetic workers around the Party and of seriously taking up the rooting of our Party in the shops and mines by organizing factory nuclei and groups and committees of the T. U. U. L., and placing in the foreground, work in the mass organizations, especially the Unemployed Councils and the Trade Union Unity League.

USE THE MASS ORGANIZATIONS!

The work of improving the functioning of our Party, which certainly must be pushed, and the developing of our mass campaigns

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must be carried through with the clear perspective of improving our mass *organizational* work, especially in the factories and among the unemployed, and by utilizing to the maximum extent the forces, resources, contacts, and apparatus of the mass organizations (T. U. U. L., Unemployed Councils, I. W. O., other fraternal bodies, I. L. D., L. S. N. R., etc., as well as the local unions of the A. F. of L.) as the means of extending the Party's organizational mass influence.

DIVISION OF WORK

A careful check-up on all inner-Party meetings must be made with the view of drastically reducing the number, this to be carried through in conjunction with the working out of a careful *division of work* and the *assignment of our forces* so that the overwhelming majority (at least 90 per cent) of our members are carrying forward the work of the Party through mass organizations.

REORIENTATE SECTIONS AND NUCLEI!

The sections and nuclei must be made to realize that they are only successful in their work when they build around themselves basic mass organizations, much larger than the Party, and through which the Party fractions can work in rallying the masses for the struggle against unemployment, wage cuts, etc., and for the broader revolutionary struggles led by the Party.

ESTABLISH WELL-FUNCTIONING FRACTIONS!

Party fractions must be set up in every such mass organization and systematically guide their work. The tendency for the fractions to become "outside bodies," giving instructions and orders to mass organizations must be overcome through the full participation of the members of the fraction, not only in making decisions, but especially in the day-to-day work of these organizations in carrying out these decisions.

SECURE REGULAR REPORTS!

Higher Party committees must insist upon and secure full reports from the Districts, sections, units, and fractions on their activities, especially on work among the unemployed, the Negroes, and in the factories. And these reports must not merely be *plans* for work, but *weekly* statements of progress, the difficulties, the successes, the mistakes, and the experiences gained in carrying through the plans. Only by insistence on such regular reports can the leading committees really insure the carrying through of a line in practice that

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will insure our transformation to a Bolhsevik mass Party. The political mistakes of the past period, and especially of our failure to correct these mistakes, are due primarily to the lack of functioning fractions and of regular reports from these fractions and from lower units on our actual experiences in mass work.

LEADERSHIP CHIEFLY RESPONSIBLE

And finally it must be understood that the problems presented here are the problems primarily of the Party leadership in the center and the Districts. An army cannot effectively fight, regardless of the willingness of the soldiers, without a general staff which furnishes the various sections with a coordinated plan of advance. The same is true of our Party. It is chiefly the task of the leadership to plan the systematic and rapid re-orientation of the Party toward real mass work in which the factory work and the work among the unemployed will be the central link. The leadership must overcome in practice the "contradiction" between "Party work" and "mass work" by developing the plans for Party work in such a way that Party work will be carried on *chiefly* through the mass organizations of the workers.

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The Party Nucleus—A Factor in the Class Struggle

By JOHN WILLIAMSON

THE problem of Party organization is many times approached as a narrow apparatus question. This is wrong. It must be approached as the problem of equipping the Party to organize the masses of workers, both for struggle and into the various types of mass organizations, better to conduct the struggles and to consolidate the strength of the working class organizationally.

All our decisions, resolutions, and directives are meaningless unless the instrument of the Party to carry these into life is properly equipped. That instrument is essentially the Party nuclei. They are the connecting link between the masses and the Party. Not only are they the means of carrying out the Party line and directives. They are also the first picture—a sort of "reception room" view —which the new recruit gets of the Party and its life. These important reasons make necessary greater attention to what has heretofore been considered a problem of little importance.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF A PARTY NUCLEUS

The nucleus of the Party should give leadership to all organizations and struggles of the workers, as well as conduct its own organization and agitation activities, in its territory or shop. As a basic unit of the Party it must participate in and discuss all questions of Party policy and organization. In a word, the nucleus must be the Party leader among the workers of its territory or shop.

The Party nucleus has four main divisions of responsibility:

1. To know its territory. This knowledge should not be merely geographical, but should include the shops; the problems of the workers in the shops; the unions and mass organizations; the nationality of the workers; the housing and school conditions in the territory. The nucleus should come in contact with the workers and be alert politically to the moods and conditions of the workers in and out of the shops.

2. To develop all phases of mass work, around the grievances in the factories and the neighborhood problems in the territory. The nucleus should carry to the masses all campaigns and activities of the Party.

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3. To increase continually the Party membership and broaden the Party base by building all mass organizations (TUUL, YCL, Mutual Aid Organization, ILD, LSNR, and others) among new strata of workers.

4. To function properly itself.

All of these presuppose understanding, capacity, and particularly political initiative.

THE ROLE NUCLEI ACTUALLY PLAY TODAY

The Party nucleus is today primarily an organ of agitation. To cite a typical "good" nucleus in Chicago, we would see the following activity:

(a) Collection of signatures (election and petition for social insurance bill).

(b) Distribution of all kinds of leaflets for demonstrations or meetings, but for 99 per cent of a city or at best of a general character.

(c) Sale and distribution of *Daily Worker* at factory and house to house.

(d) Pasting posters.

(e) Visiting contacts.

(f) Issuing once a month a shop bulletin.

(g) Inner discussion on subjects proposed.

What is primarily lacking? It is mass work, both in shops and neighborhood, which is conspicuous by its absence.

It happens many times that not a single member of the nucleus works in a shop in the territory. This does not mean that no Party member works in a shop in this particular territory. To cite one concrete example. Nucleus 501 is concentrating on U. S. C. Not a single member of Nucleus 501 works there. But in Section 4 there is a member who works in U. S. C. This contradiction must be overcome. The Party member working in a shop where a nucleus is concentrating must belong to that nucleus, regardless of whether he lives in that territory or not.

The nucleus work around factories is too much mere leaflet distribution, but no individual agitation or organization.

Contact with mass organizations in the nucleus territory is limited at best to sympathetic organizations such as IWO or ILD branches. Although there are dozens of other mass organizations (English as well as other languages) many of which may be bourgeois-controlled, but which contain workers, we have absolutely no contact with them. Worse still, the experience up till now in Chi-

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cago, where lists have even been supplied of such organizations, is that the nuclei show no interest in becoming acquainted with them. At all United Front Conferences there is repeated talk of "Get new mass organizations represented," but it stops there. No committees are sent out to speak to these workers, to ask the floor to tell about a particular campaign.

The conflict of jurisdiction between the District language buros and the nuclei must also be solved. While agitational directives for general campaigns are given to the fraction in the language mass organization by its respective buro, the nucleus must have authority to work thru the Party fraction to involve the particular mass organizations in local activities.

In a word, the Party nucleus is not a factor in its territory. Examples are manifold in all campaigns. Even in collecting signatures, committees were assigned to streets with no houses; or to petty bourgeois territories instead of working class districts. A bread strike occurs but the Party Section only wakes up one week later. Although some nuclei have been "concentrating" on a particular factory and have dumped at least a ton of paper in the form of leaflets, not a single new member has been got. A more flagrant example is the election campaign in Chicago, where 27,000 altogether signatures were collected, which means at least 100,000 workers' homes visited, but not even 50 applications to the Party resulted.

There are many additional inner organizational and political weaknesses which have been written about in other articles and in the *Party Organizer*, which need not be repeated.

CONTRAST SMALL TOWNS WITH CITY

If we examine the work of a nucleus in a town where the Party consists of this one nucleus, we see that the nucleus is giving leadership to all phases of work. Rockford, Ill., is a good example. Here we have 15 members. This nucleus has developed two unemployed councils. It has called and led demonstrations of 2,000 to 3,000 workers. It is building the Furniture Workers Local of the TUUL. It conducts all the Party's campaigns, and writes and issues all its own leaflets. Only one member is over a year in the Party.

This one nucleus is the Party, and as such is the leader of the workers and is responsible for developing all activity.

Contrast this with any one of the 35 nuclei in the city of Chicago. Here we find the nucleus is not a *known* factor among the workers of its territory. It depends upon the District office for ev-

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erything. It is hindered even in carrying thru agitational work, such as getting pamphlets or leaflets, because it is helpless in raising money.

There exists this paradoxical situation. In a town with one nucleus (Rockford) or in a new territory (Indianapolis) the organizational and political life of the Party is wretched, but the Party is a factor; while in Chicago, where older comrades are in nuclei and inner improvement of organizational life is at least theoretically accepted, the mass work is less.

This situation must be radically changed. It is necessary systematically to develop the initiative of the nuclei in the large cities, and not have them depend upon the District office for everything. The nuclei must be driven into mass work. Instead of just looking at the weekly Org Letter, they must have a basic plan of work of their own. It is also necessary to develop a system of patronage of city units over units in such territories as the coal fields. This will be of benefit to both.

ROLE OF NUCLEUS BURO

The first step towards improvement of the nucleus is to establish a nucleus buro as the leadership. The role and function of the nucleus buro has been dealt with exhaustively elsewhere. In the course of the last few months' period of popularizing the idea of the nucleus buro, some questions have arisen:

1. Some nucleus buros, especially at the beginning, bend the stick backwards, and bring nothing to the nuclei to decide. This must be guarded against. The buro must learn to know what to decide itself, and what to bring to nucleus meeting for decision.

2. We have stated that with a functioning buro we would eliminate endless routine, and particularly the reading of documents from District or Section committees. Some buros misinterpret this to mean, keep the membership in ignorance of the contents of such documents. Some organizers keep the documents in their own pockets. At best they are read to buros. This is wrong. The buro must report upon the contents of such documents, concretizing them to nucleus surroundings and activities.

3. The most difficult job for the buro is to learn to distribute the week's work among its members before it comes to the meeting. This is because the buro as yet does not know the activities of each of its members, and fails to check up on these activities.

4. Experience has shown that the nucleus buro must meet on a separate night, or (which is not so practical) several hours before the meeting.

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5. The buro must not try to rule by mere decree and by saying "Must" to everything. The "Why" and "How" must also be explained. Of course a different approach must be made to old and to new members, who fail to carry out decisions. In some nuclei there are old Party members who absolutely refuse to do the work assigned. They are not able to fill the demands of Communist membership, and after trying to convince them of their duties, they should be cleaned out of the Party if they do not become activized.

We have established in the Party the idea of the nucleus buro. In the Chicago District out of 87 nuclei, only 32 have functioning buros. In the city of Chicago out of 35 units only 20 have real buros. In the next period we must establish the nucleus buros as a fact.

THE PARTY NUCLEUS IN BUILDING THE TUUL

Today there is a separation between building the Party and building the TUUL unions. Instead of understanding that the nucleus is the decisive factor in the building of grievance committees in the shop, the nuclei look to some TUUL office to do this job.

The nuclei first do not know how to go about this task, although many directives have been given. A shop is decided upon as the place of concentration, but the work stops there. Leaflets are distributed. Attempts are made to sell the *Daily Worker*. Sometimes shops gate meetings are attempted. But the nucleus never spends time discussing the workers' conditions in the shop; how to reach the workers by individual contact; what are the grievances of the workers around which to formulate our partial demands. All of this is forgotten.

The following are some points to be considered:

1. In choosing a factory for concentration, it is preferable, if choice exists, to choose a factory where we already have Party members at work.

2. The nucleus should seriously try to get Party members to find jobs in the factory being concentrated upon.

3. Work on the outside should not be limited to leaflet distribution. We should,

(a) Emphasize personal contact. Have a few comrades mingle with the workers at noon time. Talk to them about the job.

(b) Visit territory around factory from house to house, with petitions, literature, leaflets, *Daily Worker*, as many workers in each factory as live in the territory.

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(c) Value every individual contact and cultivate it. We are too careless with contacts.

(d) Use mailing lists of various mass organizations and papers to visit workers.

4. In trying to organize workers into a grievance committee we many times have cases of multiplicity of "concentrators" whose activity is not coordinated. For instance, for one factory there is the Party nucleus, the YCL nucleus, Metal Workers Industrial League, a shock troop. Each approaches the workers in its own way. This must be overcome by coordinating and planning the work. The approach to the organization of a grievance committee should be on the basis of issues in the shops and our partial demands growing out of these.

While the nucleus as such chooses one shop to concentrate upon, every member of a nucleus who is working must conduct work in his shop among the workers. Today the bulk of our comrades are 6 P. M. Communists. This is not always the fault of the members. The nucleus buro never discusses with the members individually, or at a nucleus meeting, methods of work inside the shop.

At the same time we have many workers who are willing to do everything except mass work in the shops. These are well characterized by Comrade Vassiliev, when he says:

> "There are Party members who agree to pay membership dues, agree to come to a meeting once every forthnight or once a month, in order to hear a report on the world proletarian revolution, and vote for the platform of the Comintern against the liquidators, the Trotskyists and all other renegades, but are not willing to carry on recruiting work among the workers of their enterprise, do not wish to prepare strikes in their own enterprises, do not wish to call out the workers of their enterprise to demonstrations, and so on. Every Party Committee has to fight with such Party members in its enterprises."

In dealing with the first duty of a Communist in the shop among his fellow workers, Comrade Vassiliev places the problem squarely as follows:

> When we approach the study of the work of factory cells in capitalist countries we are often struck by the great passivity of the members of the cell. A further examination of the reasons for this passivity will reveal, as a rule, a complete ignorance on the part of the Party members as to what they should do in the factory in their everyday work. The task of the Party organizer, his most important task, consists of teaching every Party member working in the factory what he should do every day. Every Party member

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working in the factory should begin with the workshop in which he is working, organizing the Party work there. He should first of all find out who his fellow workers in the shop are. This is his first Party duty. He should establish who is the fascist agent in order to know whom to avoid, and in his presence not talk about Party affairs or carry on Communist agitation; next he should find out which workers are so narrow-minded that they are not interested in politics at all, either Communist or Social-Democratic; he should know which of his neighbors in the shop is a member of the Social-Democratic Party, but still an honest proletarian, capable of fighting for the interests of the working class even though against his Party leaders. Finally, what is especially important, every member of a factory cell should know which of his neighbors at the bench is revolutionary minded even though the non-Party and ready to take or has already taken active part in strikes and revolutionary demonstrations. When a Party member working in a workshop has a clear picture of what each worker there represents it will be much easier for him to carry on his everyday work. He will then know whom he is to avoid whom he will have to fight with whom to become acquainted and establish closer relations with the aim of bringing them into active revolutionary work. As to the latter, he must have systematic chats with them in the intervals of work, preferably during working hours, also on the way to and from work, or arrange special walks with them in the town on holidays; he must patiently, unceasingly, from day to day, using every hour, every minute, agitate them into the spirit of Communism, of course not in general abstract way, but on questions of everyday struggle in the given enterprise and in the given workshop, organizing them around himself and thus creating a revolutionary kernel in the shop, and in consequence a workshop factory cell."

We must be aware of the sectarian "leftist" tendencies in the Party, which think that today only the Party is necessary, and contend that in the present period of radicalization other organizations like the TUUL are unnecessary. Such viewpoints are against the whole Leninist understanding of the role of the Party.

HOW TO CHECK ON ACTIVITY OF MEMBERSHIP

In the nuclei there are a multitude of excuses, some good, some bad. The difficulty is experienced in checking up. The active member is lucky if he is not dazed by the multitude of committee upon committee, and meeting upon meeting. This raises two basic questions:

1. The Party must distribute its forces and have decisive say, rather than the individual member, as to in which mass organizations each member's principal activity shall be.

2. The Party must check up on activity in the nucleus, thru an activity card. Some comrades think that because they are sec-

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retaries of a language buro or a sub-committee of something, the nucleus has no authority over them. The authority of the nucleus as far as attendance and activity is concerned must be finally established over each member.

3. There must be a simplification of our apparatus. The present top-heavy burocratic apparatus is particularly complex because of our language buros, fractions, and other subdivisions.

4. Every comrade, even tho assigned to work in a mass organization, must devote one night a week in direct Party work—additional to attending nucleus meetings.

PROBLEM OF FLUCTUATIONS

This is a burning problem thruout the whole Party. In the Chicago district a strict check-up has been kept of each three-month period. For the period of December-February we find an alarming situation. While 218 new members were taken into the Party (paid initiation fee, and attended two meetings before receiving membership book) the actual net gain in Party membership was 29. This is traced primarily to four sections—two in Chicago, one in Milwaukee, and one in Calumet. In all of these except Milwaukee the loss of membership was even greater than the inflow. The Chicago sections are those where large numbers of Negro workers have been recruited but lost.

Ninety per cent of the problem of fluctuation is traceable to the methods of work and functioning of the nuclei. Of course there is also the problem of methods of recruiting and types of workers recruited.

The new member has often hesitated because he has heard of the strict Communist discipline and work, and he has built up an ideal of what and how a Bolshevik Party functions. His first contact with our nuclei, with their slovenliness and irresponsibility in methods of work, and their conduct of meetings with lateness and wrangling, absolutely shatters his ideal of what our Party should be. One case comes to mind of a worker who attended a meeting of Nucleus 502. The meeting started late. More than half an hour was spent wranging about a chairman for an open forum, and the discussion on women's work was led by a mere reading of an outline, and a bad one at that. At the end the worker asked for his 50 cents initiation fee back.

There is no panacea to cure this ill. But a strict understanding and application of the decisions made by the District Org departments, and study of experiences published in the *Party Organizer* will help.

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RELATION OF SECTION TO NUCLEUS

By now the idea of section representatives to every nucleus, and also to the buro, not just to give speeches but to work out activities and discuss all problems, has been quite well established. Of course, there is still much room for improvement.

The primary question now is for the Section committee actually to examine and give guidance to the mass work of the nuclei. Too often the Section committee takes up its problems and campaigns mechanically divorced from the nuclei which comprise the Section. The agenda of many Section committees are mere replicas of the District Org letter. Seldom is shop work, developing of a local neighborhood struggle, a particular shop nucleus, or shop paper discussed.

It is advisable that the District Org letter go only to Sections and not to units, and that each Section work out its own org letter.

The problem of new forces, which every Section shouts for, is bound up with recruiting and keeping new members. At the recent Plenum in the Chicago District, the Sections who shouted most for "additional forces," like Milwaukee and Calumet, were amongst those who had the highest turnover, while other Sections who recruited and kept the most new members made no cry and had added new forces to the leading committees. In cutting down the size of the Party nuclei, to make the Party more mobile, new nucleus forces are also developed.

This article has not dealt at length with shop nuclei, but rather with what we essentially have today, street nuclei. Even this is a sort of misnomer, as they are really territorial nuclei. All these improvements have primarily the purpose of developing our nuclei to lead mass work and struggles, particularly in the shops, and to root the Party in the factories—to build shop nuclei.

It is necessary to deal with this "humble" subject—Party nuclei —at length, because larger and sharper struggles are ahead, coupled with greater repression against the Party, and the nuclei must become more stable and real political and organizational leaders in their territory and shops.

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Some Lessons of the Lawrence Strike

By JACK STACHEL

In his report to the Fifth World Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions, Comrade Losovsky gave the following outstanding features of economic struggles in the last period:

> "1. The strikes become extremely violent on both sides.
> 2. All forces of reaction, the police, the reformist trade union bureaucracy, are immediately mobilized for the struggle.
> 3. The revolutionary trade union movement and the Communist parties are the only leaders of the economic struggles of the proletariat.
> 4. All struggles are of extreme political significance."

This characterization of Comrade Losovsky was completely confirmed in the Lawrence textile strike. It is with these features in mind that we take up an analysis of the strike and its lessons.

STRIKES DURING THE CRISIS

The first stage of the present economic crisis was marked by a decline in the number of strikes. The first effects of the crisis with its unemployment, fear of dismissal, and the like, had the effect of making the workers go forward with great caution to resist the attacks of the employers. It is true that already in 1928 and 1929 the number of strikes was small. This was due to many factors, not the least among them the treachery of the A. F. of L. and at the same time the slowness with which we developed the policy of independent leadership of strikes, which had been clearly laid down in the beginning of 1928, at the Fourth Congress of the R.I.L.U. The years 1929 and 1930 saw a still further decline. However, at the same time the strikes that did take place in 1930 were marked by the great sharpness of the struggle, which was particularly evident in the outstanding struggles of that period, the Flint auto strike of July 1930, and the Illinois miners' strike of December, 1929.

In the course of this period we found echoes of the opportunists in our own ranks. Not understanding the nature of the immediate situation following the crisis, an element was found which repeated the propaganda of the bosses and the reformists that "no

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strikes can take place during periods of crisis, and when they do take place, they are doomed to failure."

This element often restated the point of view put forward by Professor Commons, who in his study of American labor came to the conclusion that during periods of crisis the workers resort to political action, while during periods of prosperity the workers resort to strikes. This means no strikes during the crisis. He holds that unions do not grow except in periods of prosperity. This point of view was very deeply rooted in a section of our membership and active functionaries who had learned this not from the mouth of Professor Commons, but from Professor Bertram D. Wolfe, who for years was ideological leader of the Workers School. By examining the outlines in the courses related to this subject as given by the Workers School even in later days one found that this point of view was still allowed to creep in.

Of course there is a grain of truth in this analysis by Professor Commons. But the trouble was that Wolfe and those who shared this point of view did not approach this question with Marxian dialectics, but accepted the Common's conclusions bag and baggage. What is true is that in the first phase of the crisis the workers are more cautious in entering economic struggles. And what is further true is that the struggles that take place even in this first phase of the crisis are of a highly political character. It is also true that the workers are more interested in political questions, that they react to political questions. Whether this reaction is in the channels of the capitalist parties, or directed against the capitalist government, depends upon the general situation, but first of all upon the existence, role, and activity of the independent Party of the working class. In approaching this question at the present time only an opportunist will fail to recognize the nature of the crisis and its setting and surroundings which are all part of the present period of the post war crisis of capitalism, and determine the nature of the struggles.

THE TURNING POINT

The Lawrence strike, if all signs are not misleading, is the turning point in the development of the strike struggles. This turn is international as indicated in the recent strikes in England, Germany, and other places. The crisis has reached that stage where the attacks upon the workers and the culminative effects of the crisis are such that the workers are ready to fight back. Already the number of strikes in the first quarter of 1931, and the number of workers involved, make it definite that the strike curve for the year 1931 will be decidedly upward. In the last few months we have witnessed strikes in the mining, textile, marine, needle and other

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industries aggregating many tens of thousands of workers. While all the figures for the first quarter are not yet available, it is quite possible that the number of workers involved in strikes during this period will be between 75,000 and 100,000, while for the entire year of 1930 the total number of strike was only a little over 150,000. Also it is important to note that the number of workers per strike will be much higher than in the first stage of the crisis (1930). This corresponds to the more general and sweeping wage cuts that characterize the present stage, although the number of strikes and workers involved is still very small in comparison with the wage cuts, and other attacks upon the workers.

Thus we can see that the Lawrence strike not only exploded the opportunist theory that no strikes are possible during periods of crisis, and that such strikes will fail when they take place (the partial victory won in Lawrence against speed-up), but it also marks the beginning of the rise in the strike curve. The stage has been reached when the workers are really beginning to take up the counter-offensive, in the form of increasing strikes, against the onslaughts on their living standards. This lesson of the Lawrence strike is of the greatest significance and dictates our policies and activities in the preparation and development of strikes in the immediate situation.

Another important lesson that we must learn from the Lawrence strike is the fact that there was complete solidarity of the unemployed workers with the strikers. There was not a case of scabbing by the unemployed. The unemployed, the wives and children of the strikers, played an important role in the struggle. It is true that the National Textile Workers Union had carried on work among he unemployed for some time. This unquestionably was an important factor in creating the unity of the unemployed and the employed. For the first time in the history of Lawrence there was held an unemployed demonstration on February 25, attended by nearly 5,000 workers.

Simultaneously with the right opportunist tendency to deny the possibility and efficacy of strikes during the present crisis, there was also the underestimation of organization and partial demands in the present period. Clothing itself with left phrases about the "already existing elements of political crisis," the "impossibility under any conditions for capitalism to get out of the present economic crisis," and the like, this tendency relying purely on the spontaneity of the masses was in reality a right opportunist tendency which led to sectarianism, isolation, and paralysis in the strike development. In practice we saw as a result of this, that in most cases we came to the workers only with general and advanced slogans, failing to

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bring forward the burning partial demands for which the workers were willing to fight. Also the entire preparations were limited to agitation and propaganda. This was true in the case of the Miners' Union, the Needle Trades Workers' Industrial Union, the Metal Workers' League, and the Marine Workers' Industrial Union. In the Lawrence strike we had the fruits of the partial correction of these mistakes. To begin with, the National Textile Workers' Union worked and was active in Lawrence for many months. During this period the union, through correctly raising partial demands, was able to win many important demands of the workers. Thus the union, though existing really only in the cotton section of the industry (Pacific Print Works) not affected by the recent strike, was able to convince the workers of the American Woolen Company that it was able to lead them in struggle against the bosses. At the same time the union succeeded in organizing about 150 workers in one of the strategic departments of the American Woolen Company. In the matter of demands the union was able, because it had its ears to the ground, to draw the masses into the formulation of their demands and thus to carry on the battle for those concrete partial demands for which the workers were willing and ready to fight, those demands which the workers recognized as the most essential to them.

The employers did not fail to understand that the Lawrence strike could become the beginning of a rise in the strike curve. They saw the National Textile Workers Union approaching the workers with policies and leadership that mobilized the workers for struggle. The three mills of the American Woolen Company in Lawrence were the only mills of the whole chain of 40 mills in New England where the workers did not receive a wage cut which in other mills amounted to 12½ per cent. The reason this wage cut was not introduced in Lawrence is obvious. It was due to the influence and activity of the National Textile Workers Union. To allow this strike to spread and the union to consolidate itself meant a great danger not only to the American Woolen Company in Lawrence and throughout New England, but to the entire capitalist class in its efforts to solve the crisis at the expense of the workers. The bosses were therefore determined to throw all their forces against the strike from the very beginning. This explains the violent character of the struggle from the first on the part of both the employers and the workers. This explains the rapidity with which events moved and matured in this strike. This explains the rapid concentration of all the forces of the bosses, the church, the government, the reformists, and also the necessity for the maximum concentration of forces on the part of the workers.

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THE DEMANDS OF THE LAWRENCE STRIKE

The Lawrence strike began as a strike of 33 workers in one department against the introduction of speed-up. The workers in all the other departments understood very quickly that this attack was directed against them also. They had learned thru bitter experience that the methods of the bosses are to make attacks and defeat the workers in one section after another. This understanding together with the correct policy of the National Textile Workers Union, made possible the rapid spreading of the strike from a small departmental walkout to a strike of over 10,000, embracing the three mills of the American Woolen Company. When all the departments came out on strike the demands were extended to include all the workers. The principal demands put forward by the strikers were as follows:

> Abolition of the nine combs and return to the three comb system.
>
> Withdrawal of efficiency men and the consequent adjustment of the speed in the various departments through negotiation with the department committees.
>
> No discrimination for strike activity and strike leadership.
>
> Time and a half for overtime.
>
> Recognition of the mill and department committees.

From these demands it is clear that the strike in substance was a strike against speed-up. The workers did not put forward at this time the demand for increase in wages. They had been the only mills where there was no decrease in wages in the course of the crisis. At least there was no direct cut, though their wages were decreased precisely through the introduction of the new speed-up methods against which they were fighting. Similarly the strikers decided against putting forward at this time the reduction of hours from 44 to 40. This also explains why after much discussion the workers decided to confine the demands for the present to the recognition of the mill and department committees to be elected by all the workers and not to raise openly the recognition of the National Textile Workers Union. The Union was of the opinion that the conditions at the moment did not make it advisable to press hard on the demand for recognition of the union. But this remains now an essential aim in the further organization and struggle in Lawrence. Regarding the demand for time and a half for overtime, this demand affected only a portion of the workers, and the strikers did not hesitate to state that they preferred completely to abolish overtime work in general, and particularly in the face of the present unemployment, but insisted on this demand when compelled to work overtime.

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MOBILIZATION AGAINST THE STRIKE

Immediately following the walkout in the first department, and when it became clear to the bosses that the strike was spreading, the bosses announced their readiness to withdraw the introduction of the nine-comb system. But this was now impossible. The strikers under the leadership of the National Textile Workers Union understood the importance and necessity of spreading the strike. By now the bosses who had already previously planned an attack against the N. T. W. U. decided upon the definite policy of crushing the strike with all means at their disposal. The church was mobilized to carry on the ideological struggle against "reds" and "outsiders." On Sunday, following the mass walkout on Saturday, the most influential churches devoted their sermons to attacks upon the strike leadership, urging the workers to go back to work. At the same time a so-called "Citizens' Committee," consisting of business men and fascist organizations, was organized to lead the fight to save the "good name" of Lawrence, and to prevent the workers from a "folly" which "will bring misery and privation to our people."

Next the A. F. of L. was mobilized to "declare the strike not a bona-fide strike of the A. F. of L., but one led by reds for their own gains." And finally the local, state, and federal governments were mobilized to attack the strike. In this concentraton of force and demagogy against the strike, the I. W. W. and the Musteites played their role in their own way as strike-breaking agencies. Thus the strike became a general struggle of the Lawrence masses against all forces of exploitation, reaction, and betrayal. A strike starting as a walkout of 33 workers in one department became a general struggle of great political significance. In all these developments neither the workers nor the bosses forgot the Lawrence traditions of 1912 and 1919.

By Wednesday, only a few days after the strike assumed the proportions that it did, the whole force of the employers had been mobilized. All methods and means used thus far to break the ranks of the strikers had failed. On the contrary, by now news came of the spread of the strike to the Maynard Mill of the American Woolen Company, another New England mill of strategic importance. The Maynard was organized by the N. T. W. U. thru preparatory work and shop organization. Now the bosses resorted to open, brutal force as the major weapon to break the strike, to rob the workers of their militant leadership. By Thursday morning the strike committee was raided, the leaders arrested, and held under high bail of $20,000. The federal Department of Labor was also on the job to rearrest the leaders after the union succeeded in furnishing the high bail.

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THE BOSSES' DOUBLE POLICY

Thruout these developments the bosses followed a double policy. They agreed to negotiate with the strikers' elected committee. They even agreed to give in to all demands of the workers except time and a half for overtime, which was not the major demand. But precisely at the time when the strike committee was meeting to decide upon their action on these offers of the bosses, the brutal attack was made. During the course of the struggle the workers' militancy, the mass picketing involving unemployed, women, and children, threw fear into the camp of the bosses. One moment in the course of the negotiations, when the strike committee demanded that the police be withdrawn and the power in the mills stopped before the workers would enter into negotiations, the bosses had to submit. But at the same time that they made these concessions they strengthened their campaign of terror. The strike committee, on its part, had become careless, and forgetting its correct analysis and decisions, did not take measures to guard against the inevitable open attack. The strike committee, fooled by the temporary concessions of the bosses, forgot the real tactic and aims of the enemy. This mistake was very costly.

Simultaneous with the attack upon the strike and the arrest of the leadership, the bosses thru government officials, church leaders, citizens' committee, and the American Legion initiated a fake vote of the strikers to go back to work on the demands granted, the balloting to take place in the City Hall under police protection. In the main these demands were acceptable to the union and the strikers, but the aim of the bosses was clear, to separate the union from the workers, to take the initiative and leadership from the union, to force the workers back to work without organization and leadership and thus defeat the strike. For without leadership and organization of the workers, the bosses did not really make any concessions. These concessions would have to be enforced in the mills thru the workers' elected committees. The bosses hoped to make these committees creatures elected under their supervision and loyal to them.

THE STRIKE ENDS WITH PARTIAL VICTORY

But the workers, tho robbed of their leaders, intimidated and terrorized, did not accept these boss proposals. The announcement by the bosses of the fake vote, taken in a hurry on the same evening when the raid and arrests took place, was that 2,000 workers participated and that 400 of these had voted against the strike settlement offer of the bosses. It is certain that at best 500 strikers

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actually participated in the fake balloting. The balloting was done mostly by company agents. The bulk of the strikers waited for the lead from the union and the strike committee. But demoralization had set in. The back of the strike was broken by the terror. The strike committee was practically dissolved, the leaders were in jail. The workers were for a whole day left practically leaderless. The next day the strike committee and the union held a mass meeting amidst the terror and intimidation. At this meeting the workers, upon the recommendaton of the strike committee and the union, decided to go back to work. It is true that only a small portion of the strikers came to the meeting. The night before when the fake balloting was in process about 2,000 strikers had pledged themselves to stand by the N. T. W. union and its leadership. The workers, tho not present at the meeting in large numbers, were on our side. But the decision to go back to work was the only thing possible in the circumstances. The workers adopted a statement pledging loyalty to the union, pledging to fight for the release of the arrested leaders, to accept the offer of the bosses, and stating that on the unsettled demand for time and a half, their committees would have to be dealt with whenever the bosses demanded of them overtime work. The workers decided to begin to build their mill and department committees, to enforce the partial victory gained. Thus ended the brief but militant battle of the Lawrence textile workers.

MISTAKES BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER THE STRIKE

The Lawrence strike while showing some of the strong points in the work of the National Textile Workers Union and of the TUUL, such as the preparatory work, the building of inside shop organization, the raising of correct partial demands, the building of a rank and file strike committee, and the correct application of the united front, at the same time exposed the great weaknesses in our work. These mistakes are observed in the preparatory work, in the actual conduct of the strike, and in the activity immediately following the strike.

What were the chief mistakes prior to the strike? First of all the Party hardly existed in Lawrence. The few members of the Party in Lawrence in reality had no contact with the textile workers and were almost completely inactive. The District made no real effort to build the Party. This mistake was of great consequence in the course of the strike and in the present post-strike situation. Secondly, the District as a whole underestimated the strike developments and therefore took no steps to prepare for them. While

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the union locally, and particularly thru the National Executive Committee, correctly concentrated in Lawrence as the next battleground in the textile industry, the District took no steps to prepare for this situation. During this strike this tendency was again manifested by some of the leading comrades in the district. Thirdly, there was no mass agitation carried on for the strike preparations. The workers were not reached with the *Daily Worker* or *Labor Unity*. The entire preparations were thru the local activity of the NTW. The work done by the union as far as it went was very good, and this was the strong point. But this did not and could not do away with the necessity of spreading our press, particularly because it was not possible until the strike to hold big mass meetings of the workers. Finally the mistake was made of not carrying on a struggle against all enemy tendencies and influences among the workers, particularly against the Musteites and the American Legion. The latter organization was not combatted, in spite of the fact that some of the leading elements of the union were active members and even officials of the American Legion. In fact the local organizer of the NTW thot it dangerous to carry on an open struggle against the American Legion. The District leadership of the Party did nothing to carry on this fight. This mistake was very costly during the strike and is even more so now as we see the development of a new "independent" company union led by the American Legion elements.

What were the major mistakes during the strike? To begin with, the organization of the strike proceeded in a very slow manner. This was especially serious in a strike where the tempo was so rapid. Secondly, the strike committee was organized on too narrow a basis, and aside from the local organizer, practically no women workers were included in the active leadership of the strike committee. Thirdly, the comrades tho having a correct analysis of the development of events, in practice underestimated the role of the boss government terror in breaking the strike. Fourthly, there was insufficient struggle carried on against the American Legion and the Musteites. Fifthly, there was insufficient attention given to the building of the mill committees during the strike. This was part of the failure to build a broader and more representative strike committee. Sixthly, in the latter stage of the strike, when it became general, an insufficient attempt was made to build the union. Finally, tho the union on the whole and in spite of the objective difficulties did not attempt to drag out the strike after it was clear that it was necessary to call it off, there are some grounds to believe that the moment when the strike might have been settled on a more organized basis was missed. But this last

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error can not said to be certain or even very serious, since at most it is a question of one day, and the policy of the bosses was a double one, on the one hand to appear to make concessions and at the same time to attack the strike thru brutal force, thus robbing the workers of their leadership in the critical moment. These mistakes, particularly the failure to build a broad strike committee, the failure to carry on the sharpest struggle against the American Legion and Musteites, were most costly when the critical moment arrived.

The chief mistakes after the strike were the fact that for a period the workers were left in the air without the union taking any steps to organize the mill committees and present their grievances to the mill owners and delay in organizing the workers who joined the union into the shop branches.

IMMEDIATE TASKS

The Lawrence strike is of great importance to the development of the struggle against the boss offensive not only in the textile industry but generally. Already it has helped to develop struggles in Maynard, Shelton, and other textile centers. It has lent impetus to the preparation for struggle in the other sections of the TUUL. The lessons of the Lawrence strike are now being studied by these sections of the TUUL, as methods that lead to the development of struggle as against the methods of mere agitation that still characterizes the work of most of our union and leagues.

But there are great dangers in Lawrence now. The test of our leadership will not be determined merely by our conduct of the strike, but also and primarily by the work we carry on in Lawrence now. The workers will judge us by the ability that we display in actually realizing the concessions gained, thru the consolidation of the National Textile Workers Union that we can effect, thru the mill committees that we organize and their effectiveness as instruments of the workers in enforcing the demands nominally granted to the workers. Thus far we have been able to organize only a very small number of those recruited into the union during the strike. And here it must be remembered that only a small section of the strikers joined the union in the course of the strike. The mill and department committees for the most part are only in the process of formation. Here we must guard against the permeation of these committees with company agents. In the building of the union we are faced with the attempts of the bosses to smash our union not only thru force and terror but also thru their "independent" company union masquerading as a union

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of the workers opposed to "reds" and "outsiders." We must convince the bulk of the workers in practice that our union is an effective weapon in their daily lives and struggles. The outcome of our activity in Lawrence at the present time is being watched not only by the textile workers in other centers but by workers in other industries as well.

In Lawrence we must also learn how to develop open and semi-legal work side by side. We must on one hand do everything possible to keep the union functioning openly. On the other hand, we must guard the workers against all possible victimization. This will be achieved to the degree that we can organize inside the shops, and gain the confidence and support of the mass of the workers.

We must overcome the serious weaknesses that existed prior to the strike and those which resulted from the mistakes in the course of the strike. The Party must be built, the *Daily Worker* and *Labor Unity* built up. The struggle against the A. F. of L., the Musteites, and the company union must be conducted in a manner that will draw the workers more and more into the struggle against these enemies in the midst of the workers. The struggle against the American Legion must be carried on and the rank and file workers won away from this fascist organization. Other mass organizations of the workers must be built. The existing mass organizations, such as the workers' fraternal organizations, must be drawn more closely around the union. These organizations can be very effective instruments, particularly now when the union is faced with semi-legal conditions.

The union and the Party must not forget that the textile workers in Lawrence are not satisfied with their conditions. That the workers suffer from unemployment and very low wages. That we must utilize the results of the recent strike for raising the morale of the workers, for the building of organization, and for preparing for a struggle in which the basic demands of the workers that were not even put forward in the recent strike will be the central demands of the workers. The struggle for increased wages, against speed-up, for the shorter work-day, for the abolition of piece-work, and for the recognition of the National Textile Workers Union, must be kept in view.

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The Crisis and the Strike Curve for 1930

By PHIL FRANKFELD

THE present cyclical economic crisis is by far the most severe which American capitalism has yet experienced. It has developed under new conditions; namely, the conditions created by a new phase in the development of the general crisis of world capitalism, which in turn has greatly accentuated the depth of the present crisis.

The severity of the crisis is not only to be gauged by the drop in production levels, the shrinkage of the foreign and domestic markets, the tremendous growth of unemployment; but also by the intensity of the attack on the living and working standards of the masses. We have not only the usual repercussions and attacks on the standards of living of the workers, but the additional sharper and more sweeping offensive on the part of the bosses against the conditions of the American working class.

We have the statements of Traylor and Wiggin, who openly call for more drastic wage cuts. We have the figures established by bourgeois sources themselves that there has been a drop in the wage earnings of the American workers of close to $9,000,000,000 for the year 1930. This drop in wages was not only due to unemployment, but also due to indirect and direct cuts given to the workers in the last year. There are officially recorded 700 wage cuts for last year—not to speak of the hundreds and possibly thousands of indirect "small" cuts given to workers which have not been recorded. The introduction of the stagger system; the murderous increase in the speed-up; the general worsening of conditions in the factories; plus the many forced "donations" for charity, are constituent parts of the sharp offensive of the bosses against the living standards of the working class.

The American working-class has been moving to the left as a result of the present crisis. The workers are in a militant, fighting, mood. The illusions about capitalist "prosperity" that filled the minds of many workers rapidly disappeared as Hoover's stagger system and the crisis dealt staggering blows to the conditions of the broad masses of workers. The fact that the Party and T.U.U.L. were able to lead over 1,000,000 jobless workers on March 6th, 1930, and many broad demonstrations since, arose out of the objective situation and correct policies. There cannot be the slightest

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doubt that the economic crisis created very favorable conditions for our Party and T.U.U.L. to grow; that mass discontent is deeper than at any time before; that the Party experienced a great increase in its mass support and prestige amongst the masses.

At the same time, in making an analysis of the strike curve for 1930, we find that the number of strikes considerably decreased and that the number of workers involved in these strikes decreased also. The number of workers involved in strikes for the year 1930 was the lowest in decades. The strike curve instead of experiencing an upward turn in comparison with 1927-1928-1929 (not to speak of the years prior to 1927), experienced a further decline as compared to those years. The strike curve kept pace with the declining curve of economic development for the year 1930. In other words, on the economic field the resistance of the masses to the offensive of the bosses did not find concrete expression in the strike wave. The causes for this must be thoroughly analyzed and understood by our Party and the T.U.U.L.

The following statistics give us a clear picture:

Year	*Number of Strikes*	*Number of Strikers*	*Average Number of Workers per Strike*
1927	734	349,434	476
1928 (10 months)..	491	298,478	...
1929	903	230,000	255
1930	618	156,000	236

(1927 and 1928 figures from *American Labor Year Book*, 1929; 1929 and 1930 figures from Standard Statistics.)

The bourgeoisie takes great delight in the above figures. Hoover in his speech to the Boston convention of the American Federation of Labor praised highly the treachery of the A. F. of L. officialdom. Hoover boasted that, "For the first time in more than a century of these recurring depressions, we have been practically free of bitter industrial conflict." The Chicago *Herald-Examiner* in an article dealing with the question of strikes for 1930 had headlines which read: "Capital, Labor Cooperating." The bourgeois howls of delight, and their superficial "explanations" of "better industrial relations" and "capital, labor cooperating" are bound to be very short-lived, because already unmistakable symptoms are present which show that the trend of the strike wave for 1931 is decidedly upward.

Neither is the right-wing and reformist theory to be accepted as the basic explanation of the decline in the strike curve for 1930;

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namely, *that it is impossible to lead and organize strikes in periods of economic crisis.* This is fundamentally wrong, because the class struggle has shown in the past, and shows now in some measure, that militant strikes have been fought in periods of economic crisis. What is needed is a keen understanding of the strategy of the bourgeoisie, and above all, correct policies on the part of the proletarian vanguard and strong organization of the workers.

A series of factors is responsible for the decline in the strike movement. These factors must be studied thoroly and carefully. It is not sufficient to simply say that "numerous struggles have taken place," and let it go at that, as some comrades have done. Questions are bound to arise in the minds of comrades and workers concerning this problem, and unless these questions are properly answered, a danger exists that some workers will begin to doubt the fact that radicalization of the masses has and is developing.

STRIKE MOVEMENT AT TIME OF LAST CYCLICAL CRISIS

In order to understand the factors responsible for the declining strike movement for 1930, we can and should examine the chart for the years of 1919, 1920, 1921, and 1922. It is entirely correct to state from the beginning that the situation was different at the time of the last deep-going and fundamental cyclical crisis—1921. However, some general features are observable for the years 1921-1930. For 1919-1922 we had:

Year	*Number of Disputes*	*Number of Workers Involved*	*Average Number of Workers per Dispute*
1919	3,630	4,160,348	1,561
1920	3,411	1,463,054	657
1921	2,385	1,099,247	616
1922	1,112	1,612,562	1,794

Figures from *American Labor Year Book,* 1929.

We therefore see that for 1921 there was a drop in the number of strikes and strikers, and in the average number of workers involved in each dispute with the bosses. Alexander Trachtenberg and Benjamin Glassberg, who were joint editors of the *American Labor Year Book* in 1921-1922, had the following to say on the above development: "During the first six months of the year (1920) more strikes occurred than during the first six months of 1918 or 1919, and more than twice as many in the first half of 1920 than occurred in the last. This seems to have been due to the slowing

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down of the mills during the summer, followed by the shutdowns in the fall and a realization that a strike might result in no benefit to the laboring men." The downward trend in strike struggles which Trachtenberg and Glassberg observed for the last six months of 1920 continued further downward for the year 1921 when the crisis became intensified.

Of course, we cannot without qualification compare the situation in 1919-1922 to the present. The entire capitalist system was in convulsions following the war. Revolutionary fervor gripped the masses, and revolutionary situations existed in many European countries. In the United States great struggles were taking place then too. The A. F. of L. played a different role from what it is playing today.

But despite all differences in the situations, the strike movement slowed down considerably during the economic crisis of 1921.

CAUSES OF DECLINE OF STRIKE WAVE

In an editorial from *Pravda* of January 21, 1931, which appears in Number 5 of the *Inprecorr*, we read: "The beginning of the world economic crisis made the workers more or less cautious in their economic struggles on account of the mass dismissals, and the first impression which the offensive of capitalism made upon the working-class." Comrade Kellermann in an article entitled the "Strike Struggle in Czechoslovakia" which appeared in Vol. 7, No. 11, of the *Communist International* writes as follows: "We cannot, of course, get away from the fact that the crisis and unemployment *as such* represent a retarding factor in the development of the economic strike struggles."

We must recognize the fact that during periods of economic crisis, especially in its first stages, the workers are more cautious in the matter of strikes; that difficulties arise such as fear of dismissal; that the bourgeoisie is in a stronger position to utilize the great unemployment that exists to impress the workers with the necessity of accepting lower wages or else being fired. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the bosses used every opportunity to exploit the unemployment situation, to notify the workers that in case they were not satisfied there were many others who would be extremely glad to work at half the wages. The bosses used unemployment as a sword over the heads of the employed workers.

The first sharp impact of the bosses' offensive against the workers was very weakly resisted.

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METHODS EMPLOYED BY BOURGEOISIE IN REDUCING STANDARDS OF WORKERS

The capitalist class also learns from its experiences. It remembers very well the effects produced by its ruthless, direct, and general wage cutting campaign of 1919-1922. It remembers the sharp, stiff resistance that it had to encounter in those years.

The bosses therefore in the present crisis employed different methods in slashing wages of the workers. A hundred and one schemes were used. Instead of general wage cuts on a national or even factory scale, wage cuts were introduced in one department at a time. Cuts were even given on an individual basis—workers being shifted from department to department at reduced rates. A whole factory or department would be laid off for a period of time, and then rehired at lower rates. Piece work, bonus, and gang bonus systems were intensified, which resulted in greater speed-up and lower wages. The bourgeoisie used this strategy in order to hinder any unity of action on the part of the workers. The struggles of the workers—when they did occur in 1930—were therefore isolated ones. They were not general in scope or even sectional. Many departmental strikes took place. The outstanding struggles that come to mind for the year 1930 are as follows: Flint, Mich., 5,000; Pittston, Pa., 8,000 (including unemployed); Danville, Va., 4,000; and Imperial Valley, Calif. No struggle involved 25,000 workers; perhaps one or two involved in the vicinity of 10,000.

Surely the strategy of the bourgeoisie can very well be realized even in the above few facts. And this strategy was effectively used for the year 1930.

ROLE OF AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR OFFICIALDOM IN 1930

The A. F. of L. has undergone a serious change! When its role for the year 1930 is estimated one can emphatically say that one of the most important and chief reasons for the lack of resistance of workers and the drop in the number of strike struggles is the *new role and activity of the A. F. of L.*

The A. F. of L. is an instrument of *daily treachery and betrayal.* Whereas before, the role of the officialdom of the A. F. of L. was to "head struggles in order to behead them" (Zinoviev's characterization of the reactionary officialdom's role), during the year 1930 the A. F. of L.'s role consisted in *preventing strikes from developing.* It is a matter of quantity changing into quality. The part played by the A. F. of L. during the present crisis was to help the employers achieve a maximum of rationalization (wage cuts and speed-up) with a minimum of resistance from the workers.

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The infamous Hoover-Green pact of "No wage cuts—no strikes" was observed only by William Green and the A. F. of L. The bosses continued their wage cutting policy. Hoover in his speech at the A. F. of L. convention in Boston paid official tribute in the name of the bourgeoisie to this new role of the A. F. of L. The A. F. of L. is a simple appendage of the capitalist class. Its policies are the official policies of the bourgeoisie, and it wars against the workers both inside of its organizations and outside. Not only did the policy of the A. F. of L. officialdom affect and prevent its own membership from striking, but it also affected wider sections of the working class not in its organization.

It would be a grievous error to underestimate the role played by the A. F. of L. officials in limiting the number of strike struggles in 1930.

The role of the Musteites in the textile fields and in the coal regions particularly consisted in misleading the militancy and discontent of the masses into reformist channels thru the clever use of social-demagogy; in placing themselves at the head of strikes in Elizabethton, Marion, and in other places and in betraying the workers; and in performing the same role that Lewis performed in the coal fields and Green and Woll performed generally, as the open agents of the bosses. This work they covered with fine sounding phrases. In southern Illinois Fishwick, Howatt, and Farrington did the work for the Peabody Coal Co. with some fewer phrases than Muste, but a little more than John L. Lewis.

ISOLATION AND WEAKNESSES OF T. U. U. L. AND PARTY

All or most of the above factors could have been overcome had our Party and T. U. U. L. unions and leagues been rooted in the factories. The isolation of our movement from the masses of workers who remained in the shops is a most decisive factor in determining the course of the strike curve. The weakness of our revolutionary trade union movement consisted mainly in the fact that it has few roots in the factories, mills, and mines. There are very few functioning shop organization committees.

Even where the workers were ready for struggle, due to our lack of contact with these workers we could not and did not provide the necessary leadership for them. Strikes occurred in 1930 with which we had no connections whatsoever (Elizabethton, Pittston, Marion, and others). Other strikes first occurred, and then we came rushing to the scene in a frantic effort to assume leadership. In some cases we did, in others we did not. We succeeded in Flint, but failed in Pittston, Pa.

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The conscious policy of the bourgeoisie has been to weed out Party and T. U. U. L. members from the factories. The policy of the bosses, plus our virtual isolation from the employed masses, has seriously hindered the development of strikes in 1930.

Also mistakes in policy on our part are part explanations of our isolation, of our inability to rally the employed workers for struggle. Our failure to understand the role and necessity for raising partial demands; our abstract approach and lack of concreteness; bureaucratic fashion of formulating demands in the office; lack of trade union democracy in our organizations; misunderstandings on what a shop committee is; failure to draw non-Party elements into leadership of militant trade unions; insufficient attention to winning the masses of rank and file workers in the A. F. of L. to our program—these were and are important factors in our failure to overcome other difficulties and rally the workers for struggle.

CONCLUSION—PERSPECTIVES FOR STRIKE STRUGGLES IN 1931

The crisis continues to grow and deepen—but unevenly. While the trend is generally downward, yet some slight pickups are noticeable here and there. At the present stage of the crisis, American capitalism will make most strenuous efforts to win the markets from her imperialist rivals. One method is war. Another is to lower the cost of production of commodities thru further intensified rationalization in order to undersell competitors.

American capitalism will make gigantic efforts to overcome the crisis, and re-establish its "equilibrium" or achieve its former degree of "stabilization." This means further and most severe, drastic, and direct wage cuts and speed-up. The method of indirect and individual wage cuts which could be afforded in the year 1930 will no longer be sufficient in 1931. It will become a secondary method to the first—that of general cuts. And this we already see everywhere —direct cuts of 10, 15, and 20 per cent.

We already see signs of increased mass resistance to this policy of the employers for the year 1931. We see the strike of 10,000 workers in Lawrence, Mass.; the smaller textile strikes in Maynard, Shelton, and Bridgeport, Conn.; the strike of 8,000 dressmakers in New York and Philadelphia; the mine strikes in southern Illinois and Pennsylvania; the smaller spontaneous strikes in various cities, the carpet weavers' strike in Philadelphia.

The year 1931 will witness a large number of large and small strike struggles. These strikes will be of a spontaneous unorganized character; strikes led by the Musteite reformists; strikes led by the rank and file against the official leadership of the fakers (outlaw

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strikes); those which the A. F. of L. reactionary leaders will be forced to head in order to betray; and those organized and led by the Party and revolutionary trade unions.

In each of the above types of strike, our tactics will have to vary in accordance with the situation. But one thing is definite. That is, that the Party and the T. U. U. L. must carry on intensive organizational preparations. They will have to increase their activity tenfold amongst the employed masses in order to be in a position to assume leadership and develop mass strikes. To what extent the strike curve will proceed upward for 1931 will depend greatly on our own activity. And to what extent we will be at the head of this strike wave will surely be dependent upon our preparatory work in the shops.

One serious danger, amongst others, we must be on guard against. That is, to assume that the A. F. of L. officialdom will not place itself at the head of strikes when it sees the demand and sentiment amongst its membership for struggle; or to assume that the Musteites are already completely discredited amongst the masses and will therefore not be in a position further to carry on their betrayals. The Party and the T. U. U. L. will face serious tests in their struggle to gain the confidence of the American workers, and will have to conduct the most merciless fight against the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and the Musteites and Lovestoneites.

Just as 1922 followed 1921 with its increase in strikes and the number of strikers, so 1931 follows 1930. The mounting strike wave, driven forward by our movement, can become a serious factor in convulsing the whole social organism of American capitalism, and in preventing the present crisis being overcome at the expense of the working class of this country.

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A "Model" Colony of Yankee Imperialism[1]

By D. R. D.

PORTO RICO occupies in a way a unique position in the colonial world. It has an area of only about 3,600 square miles and a population of 1,500,000. Its strategic and economic value to American imperialism is hardly greater than that of Hawaii, not to speak of the Philippines.[2] Yet whenever the imperialist policy of the United States comes under fire, its advocates are apt more often than not to turn to Porto Rico and not to the Philippines or Hawaii, to demonstrate the "benefits" accruing to colonial peoples from American rule. They will refer to the fact that the federal government annually spends in the island $2,700,000, without receiving any taxes or tribute in return. They will point to the introduction of free and compulsory education, and to other "gifts of modern civilization" bestowed on the Porto Rican people. They will wind up with a solemn emphasis on the "greatest gift of all"—the rights of American citizenship "enjoyed" by the Porto Ricans. They will inquire triumphantly: "Show us another imperialist power so generous to its colony!"

It is not difficult to give the direct lie to all these imperialist boasts. The expenditure of the federal government in Porto Rico is mainly on troops stationed there, and is many times covered by the customs duties on foreign merchandise imported to Porto Rico through American ports, not to speak of the super-profits of American capital from the exploitation of the island—which of course is a tale in itself.

Education? "The census of 1920 showed that about 61 per cent of the country people over 10 years of age could not read or write,

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[1] This article is based mainly on a survey of the island, conducted by the Brookings' Institution, Washington, D. C., and published in 1930 under the title, *Porto Rico and Its Problems*. The material gathered refers mostly to the years preceding the hurricane of 1928. The standpoint of the authors is frankly imperialist. In the text, the book is referred to as the *Survey*.

[2] In 1927-28, which was for Porto Rico a year above normal, its external trade did not exceed that of Hawaii with a population of only 358,000. As to the strategic value of Porto Rico, it is clear that its proximity to the mainland, and the dominance of the United States navy in the Caribbean, assure its occupation at any time deemed fit by American imperialism.

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and that 74 per cent of the adult rural population was illiterate." (*Survey*, p. 77.) Characteristic of the colonial character of the country is that the whole school system is built on a literary basis, with vocational training almost completely absent. How the benevolent government cares about the education of the Porto Rican people is best seen from the following figures showing expenditure on education per head of population (*Survey*, p. 155):

United States	$19.25
Cuba	4.31
Porto Rico	4.18

Other "gifts of civilization"? The American imperialists boast much of improvement in public health in the island. Yet in 1925 the Porto Rican governor stated in his report: "It was long ago pointed out that 90 per cent of the rural population is suffering from hook-worm disease. It is not less true today. Indeed, we can now go further and say that 50 per cent of the urban population, at least in the smaller towns, has the disease." (*Survey*, p. 65.) In the spread of malaria Porto Rico has outstripped even British India. In the coastal plain at least 25 per cent of the population is infected, and in some labor colonies infection reaches 70 per cent. The average death rate from tuberculosis is higher than in any other civilized country for which accurate figures are available. As to sanitary improvements: "Outside of San Juan and Ponce there are only 183 doctors in the island, or one doctor for each 6,829 people." (*Survey*, p. 554.) In contrast with this total neglect of the body of the Porto Rican, imperialism shows much solicitude about his soul. Aside from the all-powerful catholic church, the protestant churches alone count 151 rural chapels in the island.

"American citizenship" of the Porto Rican, just like the "rights" of the Negroes in the United States is a camouflage. Citizenship means first of all the right to self-government. What right to self-government have the Porto Ricans when a governor is imposed on them by imperialist Washington and the "elected" legislature cannot but do his bidding?

Such are a few of the "fine" achievements of American rule in Porto Rico. Still the question has to be answered: Why is the Yankee imperialist so secretive about his activities in the Philippines and so expansive when he refers to Porto Rico? Why is it Porto Rico that he singles out as a proof of the "progressiveness" of the United States' colonial policy?

The answer lies in the political importance attached to Porto Rico. Everybody knows of the "model" workers' settlements built by some arch-exploiters like Ford. The Chinese militarists who mas-

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sacre the Chinese peasants by hundreds of thousands, rob them by the millions, and "legally" tax for 30 years in advance the whole peasantry within their reach, also set up "model" villages. The imperialist robbers also sometimes need a "model" colony. The peculiar position of Porto Rico as the only outright Latin-American colony of the United States, and its small size which makes it easy to handle, make it a convenient place for the display of imperialist virtues to the Latin-American peoples, for a show window of American imperialism in front of the vast Latin-American continent. When the chief Quaker of Wall Street recently voiced his christian love for his "fellow citizens" in Porto Rico, he spoke with his broad back turned to the "fellow citizens" and with his face toward the 21 Latin-American countries. "Blessed are those who come into our brotherly arms: behold Porto Rico!"

So let us accept Hoover's invitation and have a look at Porto Rico. Both as a "model" colony of American imperialism and as a country with conditions similar to those of other small Caribbean countries, the study of Porto Rico will help us to understand the inner workings of the American colonial machine, how it affects the economic development of and the class struggle in the country that falls between its mill stones.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF PORTO RICO

Aside from the sugar mills, the *Survey* mentions one sugar refinery, the garment industry, and the tobacco and fruit canning industries as the outstanding manufactures of the island. An increase in the export of manufactured goods is given as an indication of industrial progress of the island. On closer investigation this indication proves totally false. The greatest increase in manufactured or processed goods in the island for the last five years occurred in tobacco manufactures and in textiles. But in the first-mentioned article the increase is due to stemmed leaf tobacco, which is exported to the mainland as material for the manufacture of cigars. The export of the finished article (cigars), on the contrary, shows a marked and steady decline from $7,000,000 in 1925 to $3,800,000 in 1929. The export of textiles is a case in itself. The exports show a truly remarkable expansion from $3,800,000 in 1922, to $15,000,000 in 1929. But do these exports in any way reflect the growth of a textile industry in the island? Nothing doing. They represent orders executed under contract with large American garment shops on the mainland. American firms, profiting by the starvation wages of the Porto Rican workers, send to the island cloth and designs, and farm out the sewing of garments to contractors. Thus Porto Rico is transformed into a huge sweat-shop of American dress makers without building even one factory there.

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If in addition to this we notice the falling off in the figures for machinery imported into the island (*Survey*, p. 407), we can form a fairly correct idea of its industrial "progress":

	Amount	*Percentage of Total Imports*
1920	$6,828,000	7.1
1924	5,262,000	5.9
1928	5,549,000	6.0
1929	4,827,000	4.9

We may now pass to the methods American imperialism employs not to foster, as we have seen, but to prevent the industrial development of the island.

The first and indispensable condition for the growth of native industry is the accumulation of capital in the hands of the local bourgeoisie. This accumulation is prevented through the draining off of all the surplus value created in the island, by American capital abroad. This process assumes in the island such gigantic dimensions, even in comparison with India, that the term "sucking" is more appropriate to it. Indeed clearer than anywhere else can we see here the truth of the statement in the Colonial Theses of the Sixth World Congress of the C.I.:

> "In its function as colonial exploiter, the ruling imperialism, in relation to the colonial country, acts primarily as a parasite sucking the blood from the economic organism of the latter."

The balance of trade is heavily in favor of Porto Rico. This balance, which ought to form the basis for the island's development, is completely swallowed up by interest charges, dividends, and rents on American investments there. Yet nearly an equal sum still remains to be paid to American capital for "services" which involve freight charges, commissions, and lesser items. This can be covered only by continuous borrowing, through further buying up of the wealth of the island by American finance capital, and by the gradual weakening of that part of the Porto Rican bourgeoisie which dares to show its nose in the world market. The following figures will show the extent of this process (*Survey*, pp. 414-415):

Incoming Payments		*Outgoing Payments*	
Favorable balance of trade	$11,070.000	Interest, dividends and rents	$11,019,000
Others	3,618,000	Freight service	5,980,000
		Commissions	4,190,000
		Others	3,856,000
Total	$14,688,000	Total	$25,045,000

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Porto Rico has, therefore, to cover $10,357,000. This is covered in the following manner:

Net decrease in Porto Rican capital abroad	$3,192,000
Increase in foreign investments in Porto Rico	7,165,000
Total	$10,357,000

These figures[3] refer to the year 1927-28, which is said to be better than the preceding two years. What is going on now, after the hurricane and with the break-down of the whole economic life of the country on account of the crisis, one shivers to think.

An instance of how American imperialism uses its political domination over the island is provided by the operation of the coastal shipping and tariff acts. The coastal shipping act requires that all trade between Porto Rico and American ports be carried in American bottoms. This results in a peculiar phenomenon. The share of the United States in Porto Rican exports is 93 per cent, in imports—87 per cent. The difference, we see, is negligible. Yet of the tonnage which carries import cargo to Porto Rico, about 35 per cent is foreign, while in the export trade the percentage is less than 5 per cent (figures for the year 1926-28). This strange phenomenon results from the fact that the European ships (the only ones to compete with American shipping) on their return journey from Latin-America would be unable to call at American ports had they picked up cargoes for these ports in Porto Rica.

How does this react on the economic development of the country? It hands over the monopoly of shipping to American companies and enables them to charge monopolistic freight rates.[4] It turns the whole trade of the island towards the United States, virtually cutting it off from the world market and making the Porto Rican trade the monopoly of American firms even when it is directed to other countries than the United States.

The tariff act works on the same lines. The high protective tariffs mean that the Porto Rican industries which, owing to Porto

[3] The *Survey* computes these figures considering all residents of the island as Porto Rican yet it is clear that among them there are also some American capitalists.

[4] Here are some instances: Cuba "can bring rice all the way across the Pacific at a cost of only 1/10th of a cent more (in freight charges) than the cost of bringing it from Louisiana." On refined sugar the freight rate from Cuba to New York is around 13 cents a hundred, as against 21 cents from Porto Rico. (*Survey*, p. 411.)

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Rico's poverty in raw materials, must rely on outside sources of supply, cannot get these raw materials in the cheapest market and again must pay the monopolistic prices of American producers. On the mainland, when articles made of imported raw materials are exported, the customs duties paid on the imported raw materials are refunded to the manufacturer. The Porto Rican manufacturers are denied this privilege. This is partly responsible for the strangling of the cigar-making industry which uses for stemming tobacco imported from Cuba. The benefits which the Porto Rican economy is supposed to get from the tariff act opening to it the American market, are real only in the case of the sugar industry, and here they are pocketed by the American companies. Coffee, on the other hand, which is the second largest branch of agricultural production in the island but is grown by Porto Rican farmers, is exported mostly to foreign countries.

The control of credit is of course completely in the hands of American banks. Here comes in another direct discrimination against native industries. The interest charges for Porto Rican borrowers is laid down through an agreement between the banks, at 10 per cent for small loans and not less than 8 per cent for large amounts, whereas for American firms it is 6 per cent and less. Moreover, these rates are rigidly uniform throughout the year, which, in a country dependent on seasonal economic activities, can only retard its economic development. To sum up, it is worth while to quote from the *Survey* the following significant remarks. Concerning the only modern sugar refinery in the island, it says:

> "The latter establishment might easily be extended to handle all the island's crop. This is not likely to occur, partly because the largest producers presumably have refinery connections on the mainland and partly because the complex conditions (!) surrounding this industry do not favor the concentration of refining in cane producing countries.'" (p. 457.)

And finally, an open confession:

> "Another handicap to the development of large scale enterprise is found in the alleged restlessness of labor and the fear occasionally expressed by large employers that the introduction of big manufacturing enterprises would create a discontented labor class." (p. 465.)

Comments are superfluous.

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THE AGRARIAN PROBLEM

Incredible as it may seem, there were some good Communists who denied the existence of an agrarian problem in the Caribbean countries where, as in Cuba, the plantations occupy a dominating position. In these countries, they argued, the peasant is all gone: the plantation swallowed him up and then spat him out as an agricultural laborer.

There is no denying the fact that the number of peasant proprietors in the Caribbean areas is rapidly diminishing. But on the strength of this argument to "liquidate the Caribbean peasant as a class" means to imply that finance capital could solve the problem of large scale production in agriculture, which it cannot. Only two years ago the pro-imperialist authors of the *Survey* wrote with regard to the plantation system in Porto Rico:

> "So far as cane planting goes, the existing agricultural economy of the island is rational and serves the needs of its people as well as any other of which we have present knowledge." (p. 647.)

But right now, in the face of the acute crisis in sugar, the same American imperialists are starting a propaganda for the "diversification of agriculture" and the raising of food for local consumption in the cane-growing countries, which can mean only a new expansion of small scale agricultural economy. So is imperialism again sharpening, and on an even larger scale, the peasant problem with all its contradictions which, according to the above-mentioned comrades, disappeared from the Caribbean countries. We will return to this subject later. Now let us proceed with what proof there is about the existence of the peasant in Porto Rico.

THE PEASANT PROPRIETOR

No less than 73 per cent of the Porto Rican population is rural. The number of individual land-owners is given for 1928 as 57,310. The number of laborers in the sugar industry (including the mills) is estimated as 90,000 for the same year. The production of coffee, tobacco, and fruit certainly employs fewer agricultural workers. Thus there remains a large section of the rural population, which can be nothing but tenants, working on land leased from the sugar mills or from individual land-owners.

The following figures give some idea about the distribution of landed property in 1928 (*Survey*, p. 497):

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Size of Property (*In Acres*)	*Number*		*Total Area*	
Under 5	29,215	47,297	69,026	192,716
5 to 10	18,082		123,690	
10 to 20	15,075	26,529	203,639	548,410
20 to 50	11,454		344,771	
50 to 100	4,136		279,478	
100 to 500	3,351		639,294	
500 to 1,000	242	322	169,086	301,653
1,000 and over	80		132,567	
Total	81,635		1,961,551	

From these figures we see that about 58 per cent of the holdings are less than 10 acres and comprise less than 10 per cent of the total area. But these figures do not yet tell the whole truth about the land hunger, not only of the peasant tenant, but of the overwhelming majority of the peasant proprietors.

The total number of land-owners given as 57,310 is much less than the total number of holdings (81,635). This is noticeable not only in the totals but in all groups. This means that one owner holds land in different places. But whereas for the lower groups it entails the splitting of the poor peasant's five acres into small strips scattered in various directions, in the case of the upper divisions this shows a far greater concentration of land than indicated by the figures. We have, indeed, direct evidence to this effect. "In 1917," says the *Survey*, "there were 477 individuals, partnerships, and corporations possessing holdings of agricultural land in excess of 500 acres, who owned in the aggregate 537,193 acres, or over 26 per cent of all the rural land upon the assessors' rolls. They leased in addition over 123,000 acres, so that the total area under their control exceeded 37 per cent of the land reported for taxation." On the basis of land values the *Survey* computes that "these 477 holders owned nearly one-third, and controlled through ownership and lease together over one-half, of the assessed capital land value of Porto Rico." (p. 496.)

Another factor is the quality of the land. The total privately owned land is as we see, 1,962,000 acres, whereas the total cultivated area of the island is given as 600,000 acres, or only about 30 per cent. On whom falls the burden of the uncultivated (and largely uncultivable) land? For this complete figures are absent, but certain illustrations are possible.

In the sugar farms, covered by the *Survey*, the percentage of the farm area used for cane sharply increased with the increased size of

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the farm. The average shows than a farm with an area of 32 acres has in cane only 8.5 acres, or a quarter of the farm land. A farm with an area of 446 acres has in cane 155 acres, or more than one-third, while a farm with an area of 897 acres has 483, or considerably more than half. As other crops are negligible on these farms, this means the smaller the farm the greater is the proportion of waste land it has to carry. The same thing is confirmed by the coffee farms. An average farm of 38.1 acres has 10.9 acres waste land (directly designated so by the *Survey*) which is about 29 per cent, whereas on farms with an average of 848 acres the amount of waste land is 201 acres or less than one-fourth. These illustrations are sufficient to show that were figures for the distribution of the cultivated area available they would show a far greater concentration of the best lands—both owned and leased—in the hands of a few parasites than is indicated by the figures given above. From this we can see what truth there is in the assertion of the *Survey* (page 499) that, "The large owners do not by any means monopolize the most fertile lands."

Several major conditions affect the farmers' production: taxes, credit, the quantity of animals and machinery in his possession, and in certain cases irrigation. The attitude of the colonial government to the "independent" Porto Rican farmer can best be illustrated by the data on taxes. "Taxes," says the *Survey*, "formed about 12 per cent of the gross expense of the two small groups, and only about 5 per cent of the gross expense of the two groups of 26 to 50 and 51 to 200 acres in cane, and only about 2 per cent of the gross expense of the largest sized group," (page 624), that is, with an average area of 897 acres and with 483 acres in cane. That this difference in taxation is not the result only of the larger size of the farm and of the advantages of large scale production, is proved by the incidence of taxation per acre of cane land and per acre of the whole area of the farms:[5]

Average Acres Per Farm	*Average Acres In Cane*	*Taxes Per Acre of Whole Area*	*Taxes Per Acres of Cane*
32.0	8.5	$2.75	$10.35
126.0	21.8	1.68	9.70
176.7	41.2	1.72	7.38
446.3	154.9	2.40	6.90
897.0	482.6	0.80	1.50

[5]This table is calculated on the strength of the data given in the *Survey*.

This is a splendid example of a progressive tax, only in inverse

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ratio to the amount of wealth taxed. Similarly, when we find that out of 33,000 acres of irrigated land 24,000 acres pay $11.50 per acre, while 9,000 acres "having vested rights in the use of the water, receive the benefits without costs" (*Survey*, p. 360), we can well imagine who are the recipients of these benefits. These facts, more clearly than anything else, show that the American sugar companies and the few big native land-owners are the real government of the island.

The American government has opened a number of branches of the Federal Land Bank and of the Intermediate Credit Bank ostensibly to supply cheap credit to the Porto Rican farmers. Yet, "On small farms the merchant furnished as much as 82 per cent of the total amount borrowed by the farmer, largely in the form of provisions, upon the security of the current crop." (p. 667.) "Coffee farmers, like tobacco farmers and cane colonos, sell their crops in practically every instance to their creditors." (p. 671.) In other words, under a civilized government, with the power of finance capital penetrating to every corner of the island, with the world market deciding the fate of each and every Porto Rican peasant, the usurer reigns supreme in the Porto Rican countryside, just as in all other colonies, forming another wall between the farmer and the market, depriving him of his bargaining power as an "independent" member of capitalist society and a "free" citizen of the great American nation.

To round out the picture a few remarks will suffice. The concentration of the land in the hands of the few is inevitably accompanied by the concentration of live stock and better implements. All these conditions result in the ruination of the small capitalist farmer. A farm of an average size of 32 acres is not a small holding in Porto Rico. It works on an account basis, the farmer in addition to his own labor employs hired labor—in a word, it is a capitalist farm. Here are the results of its operation: "Even when no charge is made for the labor and management of the operator (farmer), only one of the five farms with 10 acres and less of cane came within $25.00 of paying crop expenses and paying for the use of capital and real estate." (p. 624.) When all expenses and charges are taken into consideration, all three lower-sized groups of cane farms work at a loss.

It isn't our business to sympathize with the small exploiter of agricultural labor any more than with the small exploiter of industrial labor. But from these figures we can well see the lot of the small peasant proprietor who does not exploit hired labor. He can survive only at the expense of a continuous lowering of his standard of living, with conditions often worse than those of the agricultural

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laborer. In these over-populated countries land values bear little relation to the returns from land, and are so high that the peasant proprietor can drag on for a considerable time by borrowing and mortgaging his land before he is finally ousted from it. That this process of the expropriation of the small farmer is nevertheless proceeding in rapid tempo, is shown for instance by investigations in the irrigated area:

> "In 1916 were listed 75 farms; in 1928 there were only two-thirds as many. Of the 75 farms 68 were of 500 acres and less in 1916, and contained one-fourth of the total area. In 12 years these had dropped to 47 farms with only one-eighth of the total area. Four large plantations included nearly 80 per cent of the land irrigated." (*Survey*, p. 362.)

The problem of the landless peasant and of the role of American capital with the plantation system will be dealt with in the next article.

CORRECTIONS

The article on "The Revolutionary Movement in Mexico," which appeared in the February issue of the *Communist*, contained the following errors of translation:

Page 124, paragraph 2 reads: "The results of the agrarian reform have been: 590,000 peasants deprived of land," etc. *Should read*: "The results of the grarian reform have been: 590,000 peasants were allotted land," etc.

Page 127, paragraph 2, reads: "(b) indefinite suspension of the payment of the agrarian debt and nullification of the farm mortgages," etc. *Should read*: "(b) indefinite suspension of the payment of the agrarian debt and nullification of the farm bonds," etc. (These bonds represent the accepted value of the land taken by the government from the landlords. The government is to pay the landlord for the land taken from him.)

Page 128, paragraph 1, reads: "and the powerful 'El Aguila' oil company, which last year paid 50 per cent of all the taxes on oil and was valued at 17,000,000 pesos." *Should read*s "and the powerful 'El Aguila' oil company, which last year paid 50 per cent of all the taxes on oil and made a profit of 17,000,000 pesos."

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Blood Stained Nitrates of Chile

By ALBERT MOREAU

THE natural resources of Chile are great. Ever since imperialist experts submitted their reports on the potential raw materials found in that comparatively small country, it has been the policy of British financial interests to get hold of the mines. The following figures give more or less of an exact picture of the importance and motives of imperialist penetration:

	Reserves (*million tons*)	*Annual exploitation* (*million tons*)
Nitrate	2,000	3.
Copper	3,000	0.25
Iron	2,500	1.5
Coal	2,000	1.5

All these metals are found in great deposits in the northern part of Chile. The extraction of nitrates has been of special interest to the British magnates since 1889. Until 1914 England was the undisputed owner of the nitrate deposits. But the United States was in fact a great consumer. No less than 50 per cent was bought annually by American companies. Control of the mines through the Association of Nitrate Producers, dominated by British bankers, fixed the nitrate and copper prices for United States buyers. This highly prejudiced American capitalist interests. Guggenheim, head of the copper trust in this country, determined not to submit to the dictates of British bankers. A fight to the finish began, and the State Department was urged, of course, "to head the struggle in behalf of American bankers and magnates."

"EXPERT" RECOMMENDATIONS

In 1923 the American Congress gave the signal for the loading of American rifles against Britain by instructing its Department of Commerce to "investigate" the discrepancies in Chile greatly detrimental to United States interests. In 1924 a report was submitted in behalf of the Department of Commerce by two "experts," H. Foster Brain, and H. S. Mulliken, in which the basis was laid for the monopoly of the nitrate mines by Guggenheim through the use of all available means and for the destruction of the then powerful barrier, the English-controlled association. The war against the fixing of nitrate prices in which American capital had no participa-

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tion, was to start through "scientific means." What were those "scientific means"? Simply the establishment of technical processes that would allow an increase of 55 to 65 per cent in production without any proportional increase in the cost. Furthermore, the report stated that "the Chilean worker is exceptionally able but in relation to his salary he does not produce what he should." We must remember that Hoover was then at the head of the Department of Commerce, in sharp conflict against the Chilean government's favoring of British nitrate interests. Once the policy of war against British control of nitrates was entered upon by the White House, political intrigues were stirred up within the government of Chile.

GROWTH OF YANKEE CAPITAL

In order to understand well the gigantic strides made by Guggenheim and the American bankers towards the execution of this policy, a glance is necessary at the following table of control by Yankee capital over metal production in Chile in 1925:

Gold	74%	Iron Ore	100%
Silver	60%	Nitrate	7%
Copper	92%	Iodine	5%
Manganese	26%		

The inflow of American capital since the declaration of war against the British-controlled nitrate trust was fabulous. In 1912 American investments were $15,000,000, and in 1925—$360,000,000. By the end of 1927 the figure almost doubled. Thus American capital was carrying out its plans for the introduction of a system of high technique coupled with increased productivity, the intensification of exploitation and speed-up, in a word rationalization, that far overcame the lower cost of production in the British mines. Expenses were reduced by one-third.

American bankers headed by Guggenheim came to the rescue of the crushed and succumbing English-owned mines by buying them over. Guggenheim emerged victorious if not yet fully triumphant. Now Guggenheim the "benevolent," the great "philanthropist," extends a loan of $500,000,000 for "national commercial aviation."

WORKERS RESIST RATIONALIZATION

However, a great obstacle was encountered. The workers of Chile have a long history of militant class struggle against their exploiters. The industrial and agricultural workers, through a long series of bitter class battles, suceeded up to 1927 in building strong class organizations. On all fronts they unceasingly carried on the

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struggle against their bosses and their government. Discounting the salaried employees in commercial firms, banks, and the like, the wage workers of Chile reach the highly significant number of more than 400,000, the main groups being:

Nitrate industry	61,000
Copper	19,000
Coal	12,000
Manufactures	110,000
Agriculture	160,000

Under the banner of the Chilean Federation of Labor and an able leadership, the workers were, in 1922-1927, fighting militantly all attempts of the government and its imperialist masters to put into effect the increase of productivity of labor at their own expense. The American companies were actively engaged in making a sharp turn in accordance with the policy formulated by the committee of experts of the Department of Commerce, namely the increase in production at the expense of the workers. The Chile Copper Company, the Anaconda Company, and the American Refining Company, together with other subsidiaries, led the attack in the copper mines. From 30,000 workers in the copper mines, the result of the drive upon the working class reduced their numbers to 19,000 by 1927. But the ever-growing resistance of the nitrate miners to wage cuts and general attack upon their living conditions, drove the national bourgeoisie with the help of the White House to install a fascist regime. Carlos Ibanez became the mouthpiece and executioner of the policy enunciated by Hoover's experts.

FASCIST TERROR ESTABLISHED

The 1924-1927 crisis, which culminated in the establishment of rude fascist terror, turned the cards in favor of Uncle Sam's dollars, and hastened the fall of British control over the minerals of Chile.

United States imperialists initiated their drive in Chile on three fronts: (1) monopoly of minerals; (2) steady increase in investments, with the National City Bank serving as the clearing house—from 1913 to 1929, United States investments in Chile increased 4,000 per cent; (3) increase in trade, which for the same period went up 104 per cent.

Application of the Monroe Doctrine by the American government in the disputed territory of Tacna-Arica between Peru and Chile was a shameless maneuver. As long as there was no guarantee offered by both governments of Peru and Chile for the safe

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penetration of the dollar, these two republics repeatedly leaped at each other's throats. The White House reserved the right to manipulate both governments in order to prevent the settlement of the Tacna-Arica dispute. The policy of the United States government was to leave the door open for underhand support to one government against the other which dared to resist the dictates of the American bankers. When, however, in 1929 Presidents Leguia of Peru and Ibanez of Chile followed the policy of the White House, and gave up their resistance to the inflow of American capital, the same Monroe Doctrine was invoked by Kellogg who called upon both governments to settle the Tacna-Arica affair. The Peruvian bourgeoisie received Tacna and Ibanez was contented with receiving Arica.

IBANEZ POCKETS BARGAINS

But it would be incorrect to maintain that Ibanez is simply a tool of American imperialism. The Chilean bourgeoisie demanded concessions. Ibanez received the lion's share. His dealing with London and American bankers enabled him to bargain with both. He installed a ruthless fascist regime, tightened his control over the state apparatus, has a mercenary army always at his command. A great part of the annual budget, 61 per cent of which is derived from the export tax on nitrates, goes for maintenance of the army. In this small republic of no more than 4,500,000 population, Ibanez keeps an army of 56,000 well equipped men.

His military coup of February, 1927, was principally directed against the working class and the militant Communist Party. Hundreds of working-class leaders were mercilessly murdered in the streets, hundreds more were incarcerated and deported to the dreadful island of Mas Afuera on the Pacific coast. The trade unions, left without leaders, were unable to continue their active struggle against the dictatorship.

Ibanez then proceeded, by the middle of 1928, with the organization of fascist trade unions. A labor code was enacted by which workers are liable to arrest for vagrancy and compelled to work in the mines through "working books" issued by the state labor offices especially established for the purpose. The anarcho-syndicalist and the reformist leaders of the Railway Federation lent their active support to fascism.

Fascism has since then ruled Chile. The Communist Party and the left trade unions are forced underground. The continuous spasmodic social eruptions which occur since the beginning of the present crisis, which started as early as 1928, are always charged by the bloody government with being "Communist plots." This gives Ibanez the opportunity to rally all the enemies of the proletariat

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and the oppressed, and temporarily divert the discontented factions of the bourgeoisie from their struggle against his regime.

THE "COSACH"

The world crisis now hits the very heart of Chile's economic life. Ruin threatens. Nitrates bleed, and "doctor" Guggenheim rushes with his "medicine," the "cosach." What is this cosach, that the capitalist press of the United States speaks so much about? It is the name given to the nitrate reorganization plan promoted by Guggenheim. It stands for "Compania Salitrera Chilena" (Chilean Nitrate Co.). Dictator Ibanez says that this plan means the "nationalization" of the nitrate mines, and Guggenheim does not blush to admit that he goes into partnership with the Chilean government. In spite of the enormous increase in the extraction of nitrates, the export taxes could hardly pay the interest on national debt of approximately $375,000,000. The tremendous expenses for the upkeep of the corrupt state apparatus and the army of mercenaries have for years undermined the national treasury. The government is now on the verge of bankruptcy.

According to this plan, the nitrates will go into a merger involving a capital of $375,000,000, in which the government is a 50 per cent partner. Export taxes are abolished. But this contract, already submitted to and approved by the Chilean government, cedes all mines to the company at the head of which are found the Guggenheims. The government which previously received $30,000,000 as export tax will now as "partner" receive a minimum return of $22,500,000, $20,000,000, and $17,500,000 for the years of 1931, 1932, and 1933 respectively. This is a deep slash in the annual budget. This is how Ibanez and his camarilla are desperately trying to solve the crisis and the national debt problems.

CLASS CONTRADICTIONS ACCENTUATED

As a result of the crisis the class contradictions have of late been considerably accentuated. With the steady sinking of trade and commerce, the petty bourgeoisie is given a staggering blow. Ibanez is compelled to reduce expenses by wholesale discharge of government employees. The state and commercial employees, students and intellectuals who in the colonies and semi-colonies cling to the imperialist enterprises and the corrupt state apparatus as their sole means of subsistence, number in Chile about 400,000. They are the forces that are moving in divided blocs against the regime that menaces their very existence. The petty bourgeoisie is incapable of leading the revolutionary movement for national emancipation. This

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is a characteristic common to the petty bourgeoisie in all colonies. The division among its ranks is a logical consequnce of the very nature of its vacillating attitude. At a decisive moment, it constitutes a great menace for the workers and peasants. The petty-bourgeois leaders of the movement have unmistakably a strong inclination towards fascism, for a compromise with imperialism. The revolutionary role of the petty bourgeoisie, however, must not be underestimated. In the colonies and semi-colonies it feels the burden of imperialist domination. The small traders, the artisans, and commercial employees constantly face annihilation before the advance of the colossus. The only means of livelihood for the student graduates is the government job to which they desperately cling. Others find themselves locked out by the imperialist enterprises, especially in Latin America where American corporations, trusts, and banks import their own technicians and experts from the United States. Thus the petty bourgeoisie is driven into the struggle against the much hated imperialism. The success of this struggle depends, of course, upon the leadership of the proletariat, upon its assuming the hegemony in the anti-imperialist revolution.

EXPLOITATION OF PEASANTS AND INDIANS

The best allies of the proletariat are the poor peasants, tenant farmers, and agricultural workers who are living in Chile under semi-feudal slavery. Of the total cultivable land of 23,129,772 hectares, 2,515,427 are under cultivation, and only 255,358 belong to poor peasants. From these figures we derive two primary conclusions: (1) That because of the shifting of the economic basis of the country from agriculture to extraction of raw material, it has been the policy of the ruling class completely to disregard the development of irrigation and transport systems; hordes of peasants were compelled to abandon their land for pasture; (2) That only a small percentage of the arable land "belongs" to the peasants. The poor peasants and the tenant farmers are subject to severe oppression by the big landowners. In the vineyards, the peasants live on leased land, bound by no contract. During the harvest season the family head works for his landlord for a salary of one Chilean peso a day. His young sons and often his children accompany him on the field, giving their gratuitous labor to their father and "not" to the landlord. The tenant farmer, on the other hand, is simply a share-cropper whose economic intercourse is performed with his *latifundista* or *hacendado*. The tenant farmer pays in kind. In many provinces the tenant farmer rarely sees money. This picture of constant degradation of the peasantry is particularly evident in the southern part of Chile, a predominantly agricultural center.

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The special bank credits extended intermittently by the government always went to consolidate further the groups of big landowners. That part of the credits intended for irrigation was lavishly spent in part for the country church, the real civil force in the countryside, and to improve the lands belonging exclusively to the *latifundistas*.

Due to these conditions, the poor Chilean peasantry and the tenant farmers are constantly sinking lower and lower. The agrarian crisis now deeply affecting South America is particularly severe in the south of Chile. The sharpening of the struggle has been of late expressed in: (1) the struggle of the landlords against the policy of dictator Ibanez in favoring imperialism and the small industrial class; and (2) the struggle of the poor peasantry against the semi-feudal landlords. Even the capitalist experts were compelled to admit that "while the crisis finds hardly any solution in the mines, it is particularly alarming in the agrarian centers."

Another powerful revolutionary reservoir is the Indians, who suffer from almost unheard of exploitation and national oppression. Chile's proletariat, despite the losses inflicted by fascism, will quickly regain its strength and will lead the oppressed against imperialism and the national bourgeoisie for complete national emancipation.

COMMUNIST PARTY TAKING LEADERSHIP

The Communist Party of Chile has tremendous tasks to perform. As the vanguard of the working class, and for that matter of the oppressed masses, the Party is to apply the general strategy and tactics of the anti-imperialist agrarian revolution to the specific conditions existing in Chile. The revival of militant class struggle is now being manifested by the counter-attack of the workers against their reformist leaders in the trade unions and a general offensive against the bourgeoisie. That the Communist Party is awake to the situation can be seen by the fact that its members are taking leadership in the trade unions. The Party at its plenum in August, 1930, adopted a program of action which, if correctly applied, will definitely put it on the road to the undisputed leadership to which it is historically assigned.

The Communist Party of the United States must closely follow events in Chile and lend unconditional assistance, material and otherwise, to its brother Party and the oppressed masses striving for complete national liberation.

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Three Sources and Three Elements of Marxism

An Article by N. Lenin, appearing in No. 3 of "Prosveschenye," March, 1913

Translated from the German by GERTRUDE HAESSLER

THE teachings of Marx call forth throughout the whole civilized world the bitterest enmity and hatred on the part of bourgeois science, official as well as liberal, which looks upon Marxism as a sort of "harmful sect." We cannot expect it to be otherwise, for in a society built up on the class struggle, a "neutral" social science is impossible. Official and liberal science, each in its own way, defends wage slavery; Marxism, on the other hand, declares uncompromising war on this slavery. To expect a neutral science in a society built up on wage slavery would be just as idiotically naive as to expect neutrality from the employers in the question of raising the wages of the workers at the expense of the profits of capital.

But that is not the whole question. The history of philosophy and the history of social science clearly show that Marxism contains nothing of "sectarianism" in the sense of an exclusive ossified doctrine arising outside the main current of development of world civilization. On the contrary, the genius of Marx consists precisely in the fact that he gives an answer to those very questions which the most advanced thinkers of the world had already raised. His teachings arose as the direct continuation of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, of political economy, and of socialism.

Marx's teachings are powerful because they are correct. They are exhaustive and complete; they supply mankind with a unique conception which combats all the superstition, all the reaction, all the justification of bourgeois bondage. They are the rightful heirs of the best which mankind brought forth in the nineteenth century in the form of German philosophy, British political economy, and French socialism.

We will dwell briefly on these three sources and elements of Marxism.

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*We wish also to refer our readers to Lenin, *The Teachings of Karl Marx*, Volume 1, just off the press, of the Little Lenin Library, published by the International Publishers, New York.

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I

The philosophy of Marxism is materialism. In the whole course of modern European history, and especially at the end of the eighteenth century in France—where the decisive struggle against all medieval rubbish, against serfdom, had its counterplay in all thought—the only consistent philosophy, the only one which harmonized with all teachings of natural science, and which opposed superstition and hypocrisy, was materialism. The opponents of democracy, therefore, exerted all their efforts to "refute" materialism, to undermine it, to slander it, and they adopted the various forms of philosophical idealism, which, in some way or other, always leads to the defense or support of religion.

Marx and Engels always resolutely defended philosophical materialism, and repeatedly pointed out how fundamentally wrong every deviation from this basis is. Their views are most clearly and most thoroughly presented in Engel's *Ludwig Feuerbach* and *Anti-Duehring*, which, like the *Communist Manifesto*, are to be found in the home of every class-conscious worker.

Of course Marx did not stop with the materialism of the eighteenth century, but developed this philosophy still further. He enriched it with the achievements of German classical philosophy, especially with the system of Hegel, which in its turn had led to Feuerbach's materialism. The most important of these achievements is dialectics, for it is the most complete and profound theory of development, the most free from one-sidedness; it is the theory of the relativity of human knowledge, which gives us an exact picture of constantly developing matter. The newest discoveries in the sphere of nature—radium, electrons, disintegration of the elements—corroborated the dialectical materialism of Marx in an extraordinary manner, despite the theory of the bourgeois philosophers with their "new" return to the old and rotten idealism.*

By deepening and developing philosophical materialism, Marx brought it to completion; he extended natural knowledge to the science of human society. The historical materialism of Marx is the greatest achievement of scientific thought. The chaos and arbitrariness which hitherto had dominated the views on history and politics were now strikingly supplanted by a unified and firmly constructed theory, which showed how, out of one form of social life, another

*One of the best-known investigators in the natural sciences, Max Planck, the founder of the so-called "quantaum theory," admits in his *A Survey of Physics*, which appeared in 1922; "In any case, the quantum hypothesis has given rise to the idea that in nature changes occur which are not continuous but of an explosive character."—German Editor.

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form is created as a result of the growth of the forces of production —how, out of serfdom, for instance, capitalism developed.

Just as mankind's knowledge reflects nature (that is, developing matter), which exists independently of him, so the social sciences of mankind (the various philosophical, religious, political views and theories) reflect the economic structure of society. Political institutions are the superstructure of the economic basis. We see, for example, how the various political forms of the present-day European states serve to consolidate the domination of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat.

Marx's philosophy is philosophical materialism brought to completion, which has given mankind, and especially the working class, a powerful means of knowledge.

II

After Marx recognized that the economic structure is the basis upon which the political superstructure is raised, he turned his attention more and more to the study of this economic structure.

Marx's principal work, *Capital*, is devoted to the study of the economic structure of present society, that is, capitalist society.

Classical political economy developed prior to Marx in England, the most developed capitalist country. Adam Smith and David Ricardo, who investigated the economic structure, laid the foundations of the labor theory of value. Marx developed their work. He created a firm foundation for this theory and developed it logically. He demonstrated that the value of every commodity is determined by the amount of socially necessary labor required to produce this commodity.

Where the bourgeois economists saw a relation of things to one another (exchange of commodities for commodities), Marx revealed a relationship of men to one another. The exchange of commodities expresses the connection between the individual producers in terms of the market. Money means that this connection constantly becomes closer by bringing together the whole economic life of the individual producers into a single unbreakable unit. Capital means a further development of these connections: even man's labor-power becomes a commodity. The wage worker sells his labor-power to the owners of the land, the factory, and the means of production. One part of the working day is needed by the worker for providing the necessities for maintaining himself and his family (wages), and the other part of the day the worker labors without recompense; he is creating surplus value for the capitalists. This surplus value is the source of the profits, the source of the riches of the capitalist class.

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The doctrine of surplus value is the essence of the economic theory of Marx.

The capital which is created by the labor of the workers drags the worker down by destroying small-scale industry and creating the army of unemployed. In industry the victory of large-scale production is obvious, but the same thing is happening also in agriculture. The superiority of large-scale capitalized agriculture is increasing, the application of machinery is spreading, peasant economy is falling into the claws of money capital, it is disintegrating and collapsing under the pressure of backward technique. In agriculture the decline of small-scale enterprises takes on other forms, but the decline itself is an indisputable fact.

Through destroying small-scale production, capital achieves a higher productivity of labor and creates a monopolistic position for the organizations of the largest capitalists. Production itself becomes more and more social production. Hundreds of thousands and millions of workers are gathered together within a planned economic organism, while a handful of capitalists appropriates the product of this combined labor. The anarchy of production, the crises, the mad chase for markets, the insecurity of the existence of the masses of people—all this is constantly increasing.

By increasing the dependence of the workers on capital, the capitalist order is creating the tremendous force of united labor.

Marx followed the development of capitalism from the very beginnings of commodity production, from simple exchange to its highest form, large-scale production.

And the experiences of all capitalist countries, the old ones as well as the new, show the correctness of this doctrine of Marx with increasing clarity from year to year to greater and greater numbers of workers.

Capitalism has achieved victory throughout the world, but this victory is only the prelude to the victory of labor over capital.

III

After serfdom was overthrown and "free" capitalist society saw the light of day, it was suddenly discovered that this freedom signifies a new system of oppression and exploitation of the workers. Immediately there arose various socialist doctrines as a reflection of this oppression and as a protest against it. But the original socialism was a Utopian socialism. It criticized capitalist society, condemned it and cursed it, dreamt of its destruction, created fantasies of a better order, and tried to convince the wealthy of the immorality of exploitation.

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But Utopian socialism was incapable of pointing to a real escape. Neither was it able to explain the existence of wage slavery under capitalism, nor to reveal the laws of its development, nor was it able to find the social force which was capable of becoming the creator of a new society.

In the meantime the stormy revolutions which accompanied the decline of feudalism and serfdom throughout Europe, and especially in France, revealed with greater and greater clarity that class struggles are the basis of all development, and are its driving force.

Not one single victory of political freedom could be wrung from the feudal lords without furious resistance on their part. Not a single capitalist country attained a more or less free democratic basis, without a struggle to the knife between the various classes of capitalist society.

Marx's genius consists in the fact that he was the first to be able to draw and develop therefrom the conclusion which teaches us the history of the entire world. This conclusion is the doctrine of the class struggle.

Men have always been the naive victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they will continue to be so until they learn to look for the interests of this or that class behind moral, religious, political, and social phrases, declarations, and promises. The followers of reforms and improvements will always be cheated by the defenders of the old order until they have realized that every old structure, no matter how peculiar or rotten it may appear to be, is always maintained by the forces of this or that ruling class. And that, in order to break the resistance of these classes, there is only one way: to find those forces within existing society (and to train and organize them for struggle) which are able, and, because of their social position are compelled, to overthrow the old and bring forth the new.

The philosophical materialism of Marx alone showed the proletariat the escape from the intellectual slavery from which all oppressed classes have heretofore suffered. The economic theory of Marx alone revealed the real position of the proletariat in the general development of capitalism.

In the whole world, from America to Japan, and from Sweden to South Africa, the number of independent organizations of the proletariat is increasing. The proletariat is enlightening and educating itself; it is conducting its class struggle; it is ridding itself of the prejudices of bourgeois society; it is welding itself closer and closer together; it is learning properly to estimate its achievements; it is steeling its forces and it is constantly developing.

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Lenin's May Day Leaflet

Editorial Note by ALEXANDER TRACHTENBERG

THE May Day leaflet which is reprinted below was written by Lenin while he was incarcerated in a St. Petersburg jail awaiting trial in the Spring of 1896. When arrested in December, 1895, Lenin, at the age of 25, was already the leader of the central organization of the Social-Democrats in St. Petersburg. Lenin's characteristic method was to gather first-hand information about living and working conditions of workers, carefully check and analyze the information obtained, and write leaflets in the most simple terms so that the least developed workers could understand. While Lenin had already then to his credit a number of serious Marxist studies, *New Tendencies in Peasant Economy*, etc., and polemics with the Populists (*Who Are the "Friends of the People"*, etc.), he particularly enjoyed writing for the masses, and his training during the period impressed itself on his writing during the following thirty years.

The May Day pamphlet was written at the request of the St. Petersburg Union of Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class, one of the first Marxist organizations in Russia which helped to found the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party in 1898. The May Day leaflet was smuggled out of the prison and mimeographed in 2,000 copies, an edition considered at that time as very large. It was distributed among the workers of 40 shops and factories with what proved, very soon, great success. Contemporaries write that "when a month afterwards the famous strikes of 1896 broke out, workers were telling us that this modest little May Day leaflet was the first impetus to their organization." The comrade who attended to the technical end of getting out and distributing the leaflet wrote as follows about the effect of this leaflet on the St. Petersburg workers: "In issuing and distributing this May Day leaflet we *felt* that we accomplished a great revolutionary task. The calling of the great strike one and a half months afterwards by the weavers, among whom the movement began and was spreading *precisely under the influence of the May Day leaflet* and was only awaiting the opportunity to assert itself openly, demonstrated to us and to the whole world that we were not wrong in our estimate. The strike developed exactly in those shops where our leaflet was best distributed."

We reproduce the Lenin May Day leaflet not as a relic dug

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out from the dusty archives, but rather as a living piece of simple and direct writing for workers on a revolutionary theme. Although written 35 years ago, it serves as an example for a May Day leaflet in any of the capitalist countries today. The Lenin leaflet "produced results" because *it was written in a language which the workers could understand*, because *it was concrete and dealt with problems which the workers could identify as their own*, because *it was distributed not indiscriminately, but directly to workers in the shops and factories*, and, naturally, because *of previous work in these shops and factories*.

In this leaflet Lenin reveals himself not only the brilliant teacher but the successful organizer and leader of the masses as well.

THE WORKERS' HOLIDAY—MAY FIRST

Comrades! Let us look carefully into the conditions of our life; let us observe that environment wherein we pass our days. What do we see? We work hard; we create unlimited wealth, gold and rich fabrics, brocade and velvet; we dig iron and coal from the bowels of the earth; we build machines, ships, castles, railways. All the wealth of the world is created by our hands, is obtained by our sweat and blood. And what reward do we receive for our hard labor? In justice we should live in fine houses, wear good clothing, and in any case not want for our daily bread. But we all know very well that our wages scarcely suffice for a bare existence. Our bosses lower the wage-rates, force us to work overtime, unjustly fine us. In a word, they oppress us in every way, and, in case of dissatisfaction on our part, they promptly discharge us. We time and time again discover that those to whom we turn for protection are friends and lackeys of our bosses. We, the workers are kept in ignorance, education is denied us, that we may not learn to struggle to improve our conditions. They hold us in bondage, discharge us on the slightest pretext, arrest and exile anyone offering resistance to oppression, forbid us to struggle. Ignorance and bondage,—these are the means by which the capitalists and the Government, always at their service, keep us in subjection.

What means do we have to improve our conditions, to raise our wages, to shorten our working day, to protect ourselves from abuse, to read intelligent and useful books? Everybody is against us—the bosses (since the worse off we are, the better they live), and all their lackeys, all those who live off the bounty of the capitalists and who, at their bidding, keep us in ignorance and bondage. We can look to no one for aid; we can rely only upon ourselves.

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Our strength lies in union; our salvation in *united, stubborn, and energetic resistance* to our exploiters. They have long understood wherein lay our strength, and have attempted in all manner of ways to keep us divided, and not to let us understand that we workers have interests in common. They cut wages, not everybody's at once, but one at a time. They put foremen over us, they introduce piece work; and, laughing up their sleeves at how we workers toil at our work, lower our wages little by little. But it's a long lane that has no turning. There is a limit to endurance. During the past year the Russian workers have shown their bosses that slavish submission can be transformed into the staunch courage of men who will not submit to the insolence of capitalists greedy for unpaid labor.

In various towns strikes have broken out; in Yaroslavl, Taikovo, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Belostok, Vilna, Minsk, Kiev, Moscow and other towns. The majority of the strikes ended successfully for the workers, but even unsuccessful strikes are only apparently unsuccessful. In reality they frighten the bosses terribly, cause them great losses, and force them to grant concessions for fear of a new strike. The factory inspectors also begin to get busy and notice the beams in the capitalists' eyes. They are blind until their eyes are opened by the workers calling a strike. When in fact do the factory inspectors notice mismanagement in the factories of such influential personages as Mr. Tornton or the stockholders of the Putilov factory?

In St. Petersburg, too, we have made trouble for the bosses. The strike of the weavers at Tornton's factory, of the cigarette workers at the Laferm and Lebedev factories, of the workers at the shoe factory, the agitation among the workers at the Kenig and Varonin factories, and among the dock workers, and finally the recent disturbances in Sestroretsk have proven that we have ceased to be submissive martyrs, and have taken up the struggle. As is well known, the workers from many factories and shops have organized the "Union of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class," with the aim of exposing all abuses, of eradicating mismanagement, of fighting against the insolent oppressions of our conscienceless exploiters, and of achieving full liberation from their power. The "Union" distributes leaflets, at the sight of which the bosses and their faithful lackeys tremble in their boots. It is not the leaflets themselves which frighten them, but the possibility of our united resistance, of an exhibition of our mighty power, which we have shown them more than once. We workers of St. Petersburg, members of the "Union" invite the rest of our fellow workers to join our "Union" and to further the great cause of uniting

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the workers for a struggle for their own interests. It is high time for us Russian workers to break the chains with which the capitalists and the Government have bound us in order to keep us in subjection. It is high time for us to join the struggle of our brothers, the workers in other lands, to stand with them under a common flag upon which is inscribed: *Workers of the World, Unite!*

In France, Great Britain, Germany, and other countries, where the workers have already united in strong unions and have won many rights, they have established the 19th of April (the First of May abroad) [Before the October Revolution the Russian calendar was 13 days behind the West-European] as a general Labor holiday.

Forsaking the stuffy factories, they march in solid ranks, with bands and banners along the main streets of the towns; showing the bosses the whole might of their growing power, they gather in numerous large meetings, where speeches are delivered recounting the victories over the bosses in the preceding year, and indicating the plans for struggle in the future. Through fear of a strike, not a single factory owner fines the workers for absence from work on this day. On this day the workers also remind the bosses of their chief demand: the eight-hour working day—8 hours work, 8 hours sleep, and 8 hours rest. This is what the workers of other countries are now demanding. There was a time, and not so long ago, when they, like we now, did not have the right to make known their needs. They, too, were crushed by want and lacked unity just as we now. But they, by stubborn struggle and heavy sacrifices, have won for themselves the right to discuss together the problems of the workers' cause. We send our best wishes to our brothers in other lands that their struggle should quickly lead them to the desired victory, to the time when there shall be neither masters nor slaves, neither workers nor capitalists, but all alike will work and all alike enjoy life.

Comrades! If we will energetically and wholeheartedly strive to unite, the time will not be far distant when we, having joined our forces in solid ranks, will be able openly to unite in this common struggle of the workers of all lands, without distinction of race or creed, against the capitalists of the whole world. And our sinewy arm will be lifted on high and the infamous chains of bondage will fall asunder. The workers of Russia will arise, and the capitalists and the Government, which always zealously serves and aids the capitalists, will be stricken with terror!

April 19, 1896.

UNION OF STRUGGLE FOR THE
EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKING CLASS.

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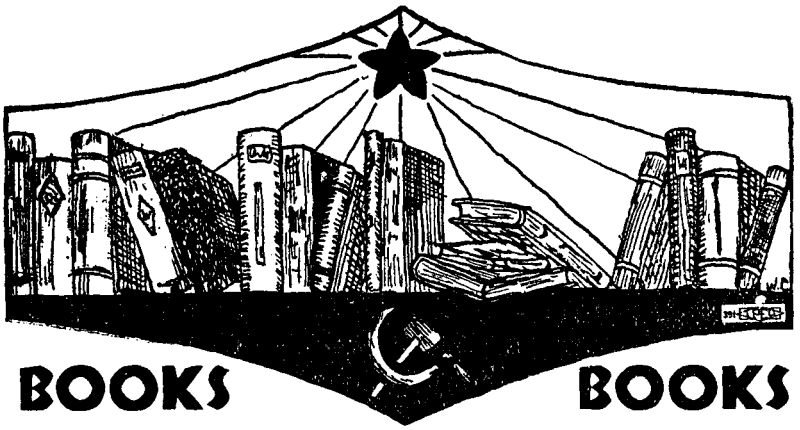

GREY-WASH

Rockefeller, Giant, Dwarf, Symbol. WILLIAM H. ALLEN. New York, Institute for Public Service. 1930. pp. xviii-619.

Reviewed by MYRA PAGE

This is a confused book by one of those confused "well-meaning" liberals for whom the personalities and power in America's 59 hold such a pitiable fascination.

All the reformist illusions which capitalism creates in the minds of the petty-bourgeoisie are reflected in this book.

The author has no conception of the social forces of modern capitalism, or of the class struggle. Since he approaches his subject from a totally non-Marxian, unscientific point of view, the result is foredoomed. Here is the way he words his objective: "to give an above-board, accurate, and fair history and personality portrait" of this "world's first billionaire."

It takes Allen 500 pages of eulogy, mild criticism, and awed meditation to come to the following startling conclusions: Rockefeller is a symbol, first, of the value of mother training (why blame it on her?); of the opportunities in America (for a small group of exploiters and swindlers); and a symbol of democracy's needs, triumphs and dangers.

With this last we can agree, although not in the sense that the author intends. Rockefeller is a true symbol of what American "democracy" means for the millions of toilers, a symbol of the capitalist method of accumulation of wealth through ruthless exploitation of labor, meanwhile crushing competitors by every means of fraud and violence known to the captains of industry. The oil king, whose hired gunmen and Colorado police shot up the sleeping miners and their wives and children in Ludlow in 1914, because they dared to go on strike against unbearable conditions, is a fitting symbol of capitalist democracy.

Almost none of the career of Rockefeller in sweating and murdering his wage-slaves, choking off competitors, and buying off government officials is brought out in this book, however. A clue to the reasons for this is given in the preface, where Allen gives acknowledgement to the Rockefeller publicity agents for their cooperation in reading and criticizing the manuscript.

Nevertheless, Allen's book failed to find favor in the eyes of the dispenser of dimes, since it does not eulogize enough, and gives here and there

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some uncomfortable facts and raises a few awkward questions. Therefore, the author tells us, "Five world-famous publishers refused to consider its publication saying, 'We don't want to wake up one morning and find we haven't any bank. . . . We could not afford to put out a book on Mr. Rockefeller that he did not approve.' " This illustrates the complete domination of the press, when even such a mildly critical book can find no ordinary publisher, but has to be published by the writer himself.

The only useful part of the book, from our point of view, is the sections which deal with the economic penetration and control by Rockefeller interests in schools and coleges, and their use of the baptist church as an agency of propaganda.

Objectively this book furthers the illusion which the Rockefeller interests have been fostering about this financial and industrial despot through its publicity agents such as the socialistic "Poison" Ivy Lee. Rockefeller self-publicity is too strong a white-wash for some elements to swallow, but they will accept Allen's grey-wash, which pretends to give bad as well as good facts and to be "impartial and critical," while in reality covering up the essentially vicious class character of Rockefeller's regime. To Allen and his kind, grey-washed capitalism looks a little dirty—needing a little cleaning—but capitalism itself is pure at heart. This is another instance of the role of the liberal as a buffer and a camouflager for the present economic system.

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